

# BARRE GAZETTE

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## Oakham Year in Review

By Ellenor Downer  
Staff Writer

OAKHAM – The big event in 2020 was the COVID-19 pandemic. It came to a head mid-March when federal, state and local governments declared a state of emergency. Governor Charlie Baker activated up to 2,000 Massachusetts National Guard members to assist with the State of Emergency declared March 10 as the region continues to respond to the spread of the coronavirus.

People adapted and during the summer months did hold some outdoor events. Oakham's concert series was held on the common, the Oakham Council on Aging held events on the common and offered grab and go meals. The Oakham Congregational Church held outdoor services during the summer and moved inside following social distancing, mask wearing and installed air filters in the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

### January

Music has always meant a lot to the Nahkala family of Oakham. Jane Nahkala came from Colorado to play in the Alumni Band with her father, Jeffrey and brother, Jake. Her father and brother played trumpet and she played clarinet. All are Quabbin Regional High School alumni.

### February

Sunday, Feb. 9 the Oakham Historical Association hosted an ice-harvesting program with Ken Ethier. Members of the OHA kept busy bringing in extra chairs from the historical museum to the Young Family Annex where Ken Ethier present a program on ice harvesting. Even with the additional chairs, some attendees had to stand. When introducing Ethier of Auburn, OHA vice president, Tom Saupe said, "Who knew in the middle of winter after an ice storm, ice would be so popular." Some in the audience remembered having ice delivered to their home as a child and one even had a relative that sold ice in Rutland.

The Oakham Congregational Church held a hot dog and home-made bean supper Saturday, Feb. 15 in the evening. This was a different way for the entire family to celebrate Valentine's Day.

### March

The Oakham Town Clerk reported a 38.3% voter turnout in the Tuesday, March 3 presidential primary. Oakham voters followed the statewide trend of casting Democratic ballots with Joseph Biden, the number one vote getter followed by Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. In Oakham vot-



John K. Leacock sheathes the roof at the West Brook Schoolhouse on Old Turnpike Road in Oakham.

Turley Publications File Photos



Over 40 people wearing masks attended the Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting Tuesday, June 30.

ers cast 140 votes for Biden, 111 for Sanders and 60 for Warren. Oakham voters cast 143 ballots for Trump and 13 for Weld.

Town and Quabbin Regional School District officials discussed leasing vacant space at the Oakham Center School. The two selectmen present, Steve Labarre and Brad Taylor said they wanted to continue the discussion when member Lucy Tessnau was present Monday, March 9.

Snow covered the ground March 24 during an early spring storm.

### April

The Oakham Congregational



The Oakham Common presents a winter scene Monday morning after the Saturday, Dec. 5 storm.

Church will not hold Sunday worship services through the month of April and Sunday, May 3 due to the coronavirus pandemic. The annual Easter Egg Hunt is also cancelled.

Selectman chair Steve Labarre said leasing space at the Oakham Center School was discussed multiple times. He called for a vote and said give the current state of emergency and other time constraints, it was time to take a vote. Labarre made a motion to not support the leasing of space at Oakham Center School and the motion passed at the April 2 meeting.

The Quabbin Regional School District superintendent sent a letter April 21 to students, parents, faculty and staff announcing school would be closed for the remainder of the school year. Her letter said, "This afternoon Governor Baker and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Riley announced that schools in Massachusetts will remain closed for the remainder of the school year to ensure the health safety of all students, families and staff to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19."The

See OAKHAM YIR page 6

## Board hears about West Brookfield and Barre EMS

By Paula Ouimette  
Staff writer

HARDWICK — Board of Selectmen Chairman Kenan Young opened the board's meeting on Dec. 28 and turned it over to Board of Selectmen member Julie Quink to go over any updates to potential emergency medical services.

Hardwick is looking for alternatives after Ware, which charged them \$77,000 for fiscal 2021, said it would probably increase the cost of the service to \$133,000 a year. Ware said that is the true cost of the service. Ware also receives over \$90,000 in health care insurance reimbursements for Hardwick patients.

Quink introduced Dan McCall, President of the West Brookfield Rescue Squad. McCall provided the board with ambulance response times to various locations in Hardwick. He recorded these response times without the use of lights and sirens during normal driving conditions, so EMS response time would actually be shorter than his figures. McCall said they can be to Wheelwright in 11 minutes, Hardwick Common in 13 to 14 minutes, Greenwich Road/West Hardwick in about 20 minutes and Gilbertville in six to eight minutes. Young asked McCall where the ambulances were housed in West Brookfield. McCall said they are in the center of town, at 18 West Main St.

Quink pointed out that the times were similar to Ware's current response time (some of which are 18 to 20 minutes), just the locations of the longest response times were in different parts of town. She said West Brookfield has the reverse in response time to Greenwich Road that they do with Ware. Quink said McCall felt comfortable covering Wheelwright, but asked the other board members if it would make sense to continue to have Ware cover the Greenwich Road area since Ware has the best response time. Board of Selectmen member Kelly Kemp asked if Ware was covering Wheelwright right now. Young said they cover all of Hardwick, but sometimes Barre gets called in for Wheelwright when Ware cannot respond.

Barre Fire Chief Robert Rogowski told the board that Barre has responded to Hardwick 13 times for this year. He said primarily those calls are to the Wheelwright area and near the Petersham line. Rogowski said they treat those calls as mutual aid, and handle the billing if a transfer is required. They do not bill for refusals and lift assists.

Young asked Rogowski about the emergency medical services Barre provides. Rogowski said Barre had a separate EMS previously and in 2017 it merged with the fire department. They have two

See HARDWICK, page 5

## Hubbardston receives clean audit

By Ellenor Downer  
Staff Writer

HUBBARDSTON – Tom Scanlon, managing partner of Scanlon Associates, presented his audit review at the Dec. 14 board of selectmen's meeting via Zoom.

Scanlon said there were no significant adjustments. He said COVID-19 made the audit challenging and the staff was very cooperative. He said he gave the town a "clean" opinion, which is good. He said the town's net pension liability was \$1.6 million. The town was on a funding system with retirement and was reducing the amount.

Scanlon said the town collected taxes in July and August at 12%; the year before it was at 14%. He said the town did not want to get below 10%. The decline was due to COVID. He said as long people

can pay their taxes, the largest revenue source, the town will be okay. Scanlon said, "Town administrator [Ryan McLane was] handling the financial end very well."

Scanlon said the town improved on bank reconciliation and the records were very clean. He said town accountant Kelli Pontbriand and treasurer/collector Sandra Nason were driving the changes and showed a strong willingness to work with the auditor at the beginning of the audit.

### Williamsville Pond dam

Selectman chair Daniel Galante said the Williamsville Pond dam was failing. The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife own the dam. He said Fisheries and Wildlife were not fixing any of the dams they own. They also were not purchasing and land with a

See HUBBARDSTON page 5

## Barre Food Pantry to hold distributions

BARRE – The next two Barre Food Pantry distributions will occur on Wednesday Jan. 13 13 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and on Thursday, Jan. 21 from 5:30-7 p.m. The Wednesday morning distributions in 2021 will end a half hour earlier than they have in the past, at 11:30 a.m.

The Barre Food Pantry schedules their two distributions each month on the morning of the second Wednesday and the evening of the third Thursday. Clients are invited to pick up groceries from the food pantry either in the morning on Wednesday, Jan. 13 or in the evening on Thursday, Jan. 21, whichever is the more convenient for them.

The Barre Food Pantry volunteers strive to continue to fulfill their mission to get food to hungry and food insecure clients. The pantry must also continue to protect clients, volunteers and the larger community from the

catastrophic spread of the novel COVID-19 virus to which no one has immunity. Many clients and volunteers are classified as high-risk due to their age and/or underlying health conditions.

As they have since last spring's distributions, in order to maintain safe physical distances between volunteers and between volunteers and clients, Jan. 13 and 21 will again be "drive-through" style distributions. Clients will line up in their vehicles on Park Street and proceed into the right hand (east) entrance driveway of the Barre Congregational Church.

They will remain in their cars. They'll drive up and be checked in by a volunteer, then continue up to the church building where their groceries will be put into the trunk or wayback of their vehicle by volunteers.

Based on the success of distributions so far, the food pantry volunteers believe this "drive-through" style is the safest possible way to get food to clients and to help keep everyone well.

Before the pandemic pantry volunteers and clients were able

to greet each other with a smile. With all volunteers and clients now wearing masks in public, the volunteers hope that everyone will still hear the smiles in their voices.

While the pantry typically used to have an "all hands on deck" approach to welcoming volunteers, in December they will once again be working with just a very small crew.

They are preparing for the distribution by only working in shifts at the pantry, in small household/family groups.

People should not arrive to volunteer on Jan. 13 or 21 without first contacting Sonja Blaney at 978-355-6921, Dave Petrovick at 978-355-4519 or Chuck Radlo at 978-355-6463.

Because conditions have been changing rapidly, please continue to check for updates on the Barre Food Pantry website at <http://www.barrefoodbank.org/index.htm> and the Barre

Food Pantry Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Barre-Food-Pantry-100156068300314/>.

## Moon shines on flagpole



The full moon shines on the ball at the top of the flag pole at the Henry Woods Building in Barre.

Turley Publications Photo Courtesy of Dennis Fleming

## Hardwick Town Election set for April 12

HARDWICK – The Annual Town Election will be held on Monday, April 12. The last day to obtain and submit nomination papers to the Board of Registrars for certification is Tuesday, Feb. 23, by 5 p.m.

The last day to file nomination papers with Town Clerk is on Monday, March 8, by 5 p.m. The last day to object or withdraw nomination papers is Wednesday, March 10, by 5 p.m. The last day to register to vote in the Annual Town Election, is on Tuesday, March 23, 8 p.m.

Voter registration will take place in the Myron E. Richardson Building at 307 Main St., Gilbertville on Tuesday, March 23, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. This is the last day and hour to register voters who wish to vote at the Annual Town Election. Mail-in voter registrations will be accepted if postmarked no later than the March 23 deadline.



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# News of the Towns



**Round Town**  
*Ellenor Downer*  
413-967-3505

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**Library curbside pickup**  
Woods Memorial Library became the first library in the C/W MARS Network to enable its new Curbside Pickup feature, which allows patrons to make appointments from their library accounts. For patrons who usually receive automated email and text hold notifications, those were also re-enabled on that day. To use the new feature, place holds online at catalog.cwmars.org or by contacting the library via phone or email. As soon as the hold becomes available at the library, the patron will receive an automated email or text notification, as well as a second email or text with a link to make an appointment. Patrons will be redirected to log into their account first. They can also add notes, update and cancel appointments on this page. When the patrons arrive at the library during their designated time, they can click “Alert staff of your arrival” from their account on their mobile device. The button will not be active until their appointment time. Items will be checked out to patrons when they are picked up. Checkout receipts will be emailed automatically, although they may request a printed copy. Patrons must make an appointment through the catalog, by phone or by email in order to pick up material. The library cannot serve people without an appointment. For step-by-step instructions on how to use this new feature or for detailed instructions on the library’s outdoor service procedures, people may contact the library by phone at 978-355-2533, email at barrelibrary@gmail.com or visit its website, www.barrelibrary.org.

Send your stories and photos  
to edowner@turley.com

## Postponements and cancellations due to the coronavirus pandemic

Given the current surge in COVID cases in the state, and with an abundance of caution for the health and safety of the cast and crew, Theatre at the Mount’s live stream production of Winter Wonderettes is cancelled.

The Three County Fair, Northampton, closed its office for the winter season and instituted staff cuts and furloughs to help the 202-year-old organization survive the extended shutdown of the fairgrounds due to the COVID-19 health crisis. The cuts will affect

each staff member, and includes a fourteen percent salary reduction for senior management and staggered furloughs for all employees. Furloughs could be extended if the fairgrounds are unable to host postponed 2020 events in the spring, which include over a dozen different horse shows from April through October, plus a variety of concerts and festivals. The Three County Fair entered 2020 on solid ground after completing 2019 as its most successful year since horse racing ended at the fairgrounds in 2005, thanks

to a widely attended Labor Day weekend fair, and another full slate of horse shows and festivals. But with reoccurring operational expenses and more than one million dollars in lost 2020 event revenue, the fair will run out of reserves sooner rather than later. The fair received a Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Loan in mid-May, which has since been exhausted and forgiven by its lender and the SBA. For more information, people may visit www.3countyfair.com.

## Bigelow library lists upcoming events

Even during the pandemic, the Bigelow library is here to help. The library still provides library loans (order online with the pick-up location as “Clinton” or call a library staff member for help) keeping safety first in mind with curbside pick-up provided from our “Book Shack” Discount museum passes are still available for access to the museums and parks which have opened to the general public. We continue to provide wonderful programs to patrons of all ages, just check out our library calendar at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/> for the list of upcoming events and how to register. And they are now providing access to the library’s technology (computers, printers and faxes) and collections by limited, appointment-only access with strict social distancing guidelines in place for everyone’s safety. For more information on what services the library is continuing to provide call 978-365-4160 and speak to a staff member for more details.

Wednesday, Jan. 20 at 6:30 p.m. there will be a Wicked Good Henna Workshop with Mandy Roberge (part 1)-Zoom Presentation  
Register at <http://bigelowli>

brary.org/calendar/to receive the Zoom meeting invitation and your supplies for the workshop.

Thursday, Jan. 21 at 6:30 p.m. there will be a Wicked Good Henna Workshop with Mandy Roberge (part 2)-Zoom Presentation

Part two of the Bigelow’s Wicked Good Henna Workshop. In this session you will be checking on the dye release of your henna and will learn how to “cone up” and practice application techniques as well as applying your henna.

Register at <http://bigelowli>

Wednesday, Feb. 3 at 6:30 p.m. Film Viewing and Group Discussion “Race Relations Through the Other Lens” (part 2) with group moderator Janet Parnes - Zoom Presentation

Join us for a viewing of the second part of the film “Race Relations Through the Other Lens” and for a moderated group discussion after the film viewing lead by Janet Parnes.

Register at <http://bigelowli>

Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 6:30 p.m. Virtual visit and gift-making workshop with author

Maggie Battista, author of “Food, Gift, Love”

Participants will be making one of her delicious gifts from her book, “Food, Gift, Love”. Registrants will receive the ingredients to make her Brown Sugar Rub from the cookbook, which is an amazing flavor to add to meats or veggies and makes for the perfect Valentine’s meal or gift.

Register at <http://bigelowli>

Wednesday, Feb. 17 at 6:30 p.m. “The Health Benefits of Tea” with Danielle Beaudette of the Cozy Tea Cart- Zoom Presentation.

Register to attend at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/to> receive the Zoom meeting invitation and the tea samples. Funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services administrated by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Part of the Bigelow Library’s “Everyone is Welcome at the Table” series

For more information, people may contact the Bigelow Free Public Library, 54 Walnut Street, Clinton at 978-365-4061 or [mfournier@cwmars.org](mailto:mfournier@cwmars.org).

**Hubbardston**  
*Ellenor Downer*  
edowner@turley.com



## Residents urged to take survey

Town officials continue to seek input from Hubbardston residents to help shape the future of the town. More than 200 residents have taken the survey so far in advance of the Jan. 11 deadline. Survey results will be presented to the Board of Selectmen and made available to the public. People may access the survey on the town website.

### Covid 19 Update

Hubbardston is a “green” community according to the Dec. 31, 2021 MA DPH COVID-19 report. This means Hubbardston has less than 15 active cases, but more than 10. The current number of active cases in town is 13. This is the same risk level as last week’s report. It is important to note that towns bordering Hubbardston, to include Rutland, Gardner, Westminster and Templeton continue to be in a red status. Neighboring Barre and Princeton remain in yellow statuses. Hubbardston has seen 69 cases since the start of the pandemic. More than 369 residents have been tested in the last 14 days with 13 of those residents reporting positive results. As of now, there is no impact to Hubbardston governmental service levels to include schools, but Town Officials are consistently monitoring these statistics. We are asking that all residents visit our town offices only by appointment and only if necessary. This is to protect the limited staff and public safety officials. Residents are reminded to wear masks in public, keep social distancing, consistently and effectively wash hands, and limit gatherings to state recommendations.

## Wedding Announcement



Brendan and Tatjana Sweck

SOUTH BARRE – Brendan Thomas Sweck and Tatjana Irene James married on Friday, Dec. 25, 2020, at Nornay Park with their beautiful daughter, Maeve, family and friends. Officiant was Donald Grenier, father of the bride.

## Christmas trees may be dropped off at DPW building

RUTLAND – The Rutland Department of Public Works (DPW) will accept Christmas trees behind the DPW building, 17 Pommogussett Road. The site will be open during the first week of January from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 9 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., weather permitting, for tree drop-off for people that cannot get there during the week.

## Hearts for Heat has GoFundMe account

NORTH BROOKFIELD – As the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted already-struggling families, a local organization is helping people stay warm during the coldest winter months.

North Brookfield Hearts for Heat has been providing heating assistance for 13 years now. After they had to cancel their annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser due to the pandemic, the organization turned to the community to help raise funds via GoFundMe.

Per the fundraiser, the North Brookfield Savings Bank will be matching donations up to the first \$2,000. To view the GoFundMe, visit: <https://gf.me/v/c/s5yr/north-brookfield-hearts-for-heat>.

## Corrections policy

The Barre Gazette will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2. To request a correction, send information to Editor Ellenor Downer at [barrenews@turley.com](mailto:barrenews@turley.com) or call 978-355-4000. Corrections may also be requested in writing at Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

## Eagle Hill School

242 Old Petersham Road, Hardwick 01037 • 413-477-6000

### HELP WANTED OVERNIGHT AWAKE STAFF MEMBER

Eagle Hill School, a college-prep board school specializing in educating bright children with specific learning disabilities, seeks an Overnight Awake Staff Member to join our residential team. This part-time position requires a person to be dependable, caring, and responsible for assisting with assisting with program areas, the overnight safety of 200 boarding students and all buildings on a 200 acre campus. Hours: Friday-Sat. 7pm-3am. Pay: Hourly (commensurate with experience). Start immediately.

### WEEKEND COUNSELOR

For the academic year running September – June, and summer program needs in July:  
**Hours:** Friday: 3pm-11pm, Saturday: 9am-11pm, Sunday: 9am-5pm, Optional: Sunday 5pm – 8pm

A Weekend Counselor is responsible for enhancing the quality of life in the dorms as part of the Eagle Hill Student Life program. This includes fostering a cooperative and considerate residential learning community for all students. The position carries a wide range of duties, responsibilities and requires a high level of commitment of both time and effort. A Weekend Counselor plays a central role in building a residential community for the students

#### Responsibilities:

- Responsible for supporting the student body in their effort to generalize daily living skills.
- Responsible for the smooth operation of the dorm floor, Student Life program, safety and productivity for 15-20 students.
- To serve as a role model by demonstrating responsible behavior, integrity and good judgment.
- Collaborating with faculty serving a Student Life shift, to maintain an organized and consistent dorm floor.
- Enforce rules and ensure adherence to the Student Code of Conduct and dorm floor expectations.
- To listen and provide an empathetic ear and sound judgment by helping students come to their own conclusions about how to address problems.
- To take part in planning and supervising both on and off campus activity programming for students.
- To collaborate information and activities with weekday dorm counselors.
- To assume other responsibilities as assigned by the Director of Weekend Services.

#### Specific duties:

- Be available to reside overnight in the residence halls.
- To provide active leadership in a variety of activities throughout the Student Life program.
- As an information resource, a weekend counselor is expected to help students deal with conflicts by adopting impartial solutions to issues that arise. When necessary, weekend counselors will collaborate with Director of Weekend Services, Student Life administrators, and/or a student’s advisor.
- Attend appropriate training sessions when they arise.
- To complete all necessary reports and records needed for Eagle Hill School.
- Specifically, the entering of log notes pertaining to contributions to the community or interactions with students, both positive and negative.

## Barre Dining Center

BARRE — Elder Services of Worcester Area Nutrition Program welcomes guests to dine at the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road. The following meals will be served for the week of Jan. 11.

Meal sites are closed and there are only Meals on Wheels deliveries.

Volunteers are needed at the Barre dining site. Volunteers are needed for Meals on Wheels (mileage reimbursement) and in the kitchen. People should contact 978-355-5027.

MON. – Chicken pot pie, mashed potatoes, country blend vegetables, apple cinnamon graham, biscuit

TUES. – Sloppy Joes, steak cut French fries, jardinière vegetables, fresh fruit, sandwich roll

WED. – Fish with crumb topping, lemon seasoned rice, roasted California blend, chocolate pudding, diet = diet chocolate pudding, marble rye bread

THURS. – Baked Virginia ham with pineapple cherry sauce, mashed sweet potatoes, peas, baked cinnamon pears, dinner roll

FRI. – Chicken cranberry salad, pasta salad, three beans salad, strawberries, pumpernickel bread

\*Diabetic friendly dessert

\*\*Higher sodium entree

Meal includes milk and margarine. Menus are subject to change. All meals are served at about 11:45 a.m. each weekday. Reservations should be made the day before by calling 978-355-5027 before 10:30 a.m. The donation of \$2.50 per meal helps keep the program running.



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## NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.



# News of the Towns

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

*Note: Many meetings are closed to the public or will be held remotely.*

### BARRE

Barre Housing Authority – Jan. 7 and Jan. 14 at 3 p.m.  
Board of Health – Jan. 11 at 5 p.m.  
Water Commission – Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.  
DPW Commission – Jan. 11 at 7 p.m.  
Conservation Committee – Jan. 12 at 7 p.m.  
Library Trustees – Jan. 13 at 7 p.m.  
Sewer Commission – Jan. 21 at 7 p.m.  
Cemetery Commission – Jan. 28 at 11 a.m.  
Cable Advisory Committee – Feb. 9 at 7 p.m.

### HARDWICK

Board of Health – Jan. 7 at 6:30 p.m.  
Paige Library Trustees – Jan. 7 at 7 p.m.  
Gilbertville Public Library – Jan. 8 at 4 p.m.  
Gilbertville-Wheelwright Sewer Commissioners – Jan. 11 at 6 p.m.  
Board of Selectmen – Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.  
Planning Board – Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m.  
Council on Aging – Jan. 14 at 9:30 a.m.  
Gilbertville Water District – Jan. 19 at 5:30 p.m.  
Conservation Commission – Jan. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

### HUBBARDSTON

Planning Board – Jan. 7 at 6:30 p.m.  
ZBA – Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.  
Board of Selectmen – Jan. 11 and Feb. 1 at 6:30 p.m.  
Board of Health – Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m.  
Open Space Committee – Jan. 26 and Feb. 23 at 7 p.m.

### PETERSHAM

Board of Health – Jan. 7 and Jan. 21 at 7 p.m.  
Council on Aging – Jan. 11 at 10 a.m.  
Nichewaug Inn and Academy Committee 2020 – Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.  
Cemetery Commission – Jan. 14 at 7 p.m.  
Petersham Historic District – Jan. 21 at 7 p.m.  
Planning Board – Jan. 28 at 7 p.m.  
Conservation Commission – Feb. 2 at 7 p.m.  
Planning Board – Feb. 4 at 6:30 p.m.  
Historic Commission – Feb. 6 at 10 a.m.

### RUTLAND

Public Hearing – Jan. 11 at 6 p.m.  
Cable Advisory Committee – Jan. 13 at 8 p.m.

## My 2020 Calendar

By Carole Garipey

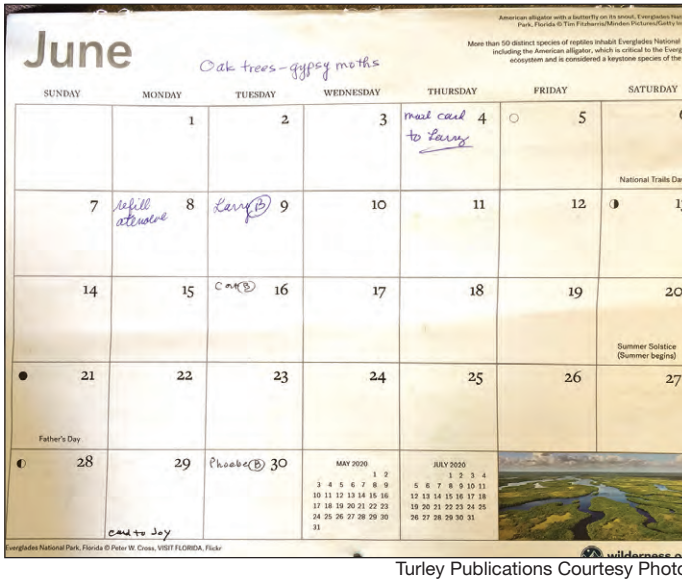
I always look forward to January 1. It's the day I take down last year's calendar from my kitchen cupboard and put up the new one. Unlike the younger generation, who organizes their lives on cell phones, I organize my life on my calendar. It tells me what I need to do each day and holds the schedule for important dates throughout the year. I look at it first thing every morning to be reminded of what needs to be done that day -- what meeting, what appointment, who's coming, who to call, what card I need to send. Everything goes on that calendar.

The calendar I take down is a hard copy of my past year's life. (I wonder if the cell phone can save all those details.) Yes, I look forward to Jan. 1. I look forward to sitting down with the old calendar and reliving the events from the past year, the people and happenings to add to my storehouse of memories. I always pick a calendar that has big squares, and the square from every day always had something written on it.

First of all, before I put up the new calendar, I write in all the birthdays and anniversaries I need to remember, and a few days ahead of those special dates, I insert a reminder to mail the card. I also get out the little appointment cards doctors and dentists have given us so I can write in the upcoming medical appointments. This year, we received a "Save the Date" card for a June wedding, so that will be added. Then I take down the old calendar and look forward to a few hours of reminiscing about the year past.

The 2020 calendar did not offer the usual experience. January and February started off well -- our usual annual physicals, my mammogram, Gerry's cardiology appointment, our dentist appointments, Monique's for a haircut, niece Beth's concert, diaconate meeting, historical society meeting, visit to the art museum, several birthday cards to send, several guests for supper, out to eat with friends, visits to family, visits to friend's homes, special calls or correspondence, on and on. Good memories about good times and good people in our lives. Those months reminded us of what "normal" life was like.

Then we got to March and the fear of a suddenly changing world started to fill our lives. Covid 19. In fact, Gerry filled



the last half of the month with a red marker to show the tragedy of it all. I'd forgotten he did that. The rest of the year began to take on the new "normal" look. The calendar showed that we had some outside "distancing" visitors in the summer, no inside ones. Our church services were conducted outside with Pastor Stephanie preaching from the front of the church to parishioners seated apart on the common or in their parked cars, everyone masked. Technology became more important than ever. The calendar showed the dates of our Zoom family gathering, and weekly Bible study meetings on Zoom, even a funeral on Zoom. Our medical visits were telemed ones. Most squares on the calendar were empty and ones that showed a previously scheduled upcoming event had lines through them because they were cancelled. The calendar that ran my life was only useful to check birthday dates, and I realized a few of them were forgotten because I had gotten out of the habit of checking every day.

I felt depressed as I reviewed the calendar. It was a reminder of how life had changed. The lack of personal contact hurt more than ever. On top of it all, I received a black snowflake in the Christmas card from a friend who always cuts out tiny intricate snowflakes to insert in her card. When I see her envelope in the mail, I always open it carefully with excited anticipation to see the delicate designs of the season. What a shock to see a bold black one with a note to tear it up, burn it, dispose of it on Dec. 31 - a good riddance to a black year!

I realized that the only things that remained the same were the birthday and anniversary dates. We all did get a

year older and were married a year longer. Then, as I thought about it all, I reprimanded myself for being so negative and told myself that I had a lot of extra time to think about life. One thing that never helps us in life is to feel sorry for ourselves. I need to think about ways we can grow from the 2020 experience, and one thing that makes us feel better about any situation is to think about what we are thankful for.

Gratitude, an attitude of gratitude. We need to think about all the creative, brilliant, caring, and hardworking people who helped keep the world functioning through the crisis -- online became an answer to so many situations. "Virtual" became the new word in every household -- teaching, learning, business, social work, therapy, workouts, meetings, gatherings, weddings, funerals, buying, selling. What a lot of effort that took! It was done by people who didn't give up, people who found new ways to go on living and helping others to live. And the Front Line people - all the nurses, doctors, fire fighters, ambulance drivers, police -- people whose jobs made them face danger, but they cared and carried on. People with essential jobs who kept working to provide us with our basic needs. And the scientists who studied, experimented, and worked tirelessly to develop a vaccine that can give us promise to overcome the threats of the virus. I commend all those people and also the people who carried out the procedures to protect themselves and others.

I always throw away the old calendar after I review it. This year I'm considering keeping it. I think it's a year I grew stronger, wiser, and more loving and appreciative of everyone in my life.

## Smola announces grant for the Quaboag Connector

BOSTON – State Rep. Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means) is pleased to announce that the town of Ware will receive \$129,200 in grant money for the Quaboag Connector. This funding will be administered by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation as part of their Community Transit Grant Program. This competitive program awards funds to help meet the transportation and mobility needs of seniors and people with

disabilities.

"This grant is great news for people in our community who could use a little help getting around," said Smola. "The Quaboag Connector is a wonderful resource and I would like to extend my appreciation to all of their drivers and staff."

The Quaboag Connector offers transportation to residents of Belchertown, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick, Monson, Palmer, Ware, Warren and West Brookfield. For a cost of \$2 (\$4

roundtrip), the Connector provides rides within the Quaboag region. Trips related to employment and education are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Rides to work, job training programs and other job-related destinations take first priority. To request a ride, local residents should call 413-544-3401.

For additional information please contact Smola at Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov or 617-722-2100.

## Oakham

Ellenor Downer  
edowner@turley.com



## Mask sales to benefit BSER

Tabby Tashjian's mask store, Storny Bridge Farm, 1148 Turnpike Road, will continue be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. She is donating all proceeds from the sale of her masks to Bay State Equine Rescue. There are many colors and sizes to choose. There are cotton cloth non-medical facemasks in pre-school, child, large, child/small adult and adult sizes with pleated and adjustable ear styles. Masks are individually packaged and labeled for convenient, self-serve shopping and purchase in the garage. Cost is \$5 each; two for \$8; four for \$15 and six for \$20. She will have Valentines Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter/Springtime masks.

### Church news

Sunday School at the Oakham Congregational Church resumes Sunday, Jan. 10 at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Children do a craft, have a snack and watch a Bible story video. Church service will be held at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary. People must wear masks and social distance.

## Skyfields Arboretum to host winter tracking

ATHOL – On Saturday, Jan. 16 Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust is offering a wildlife tracking workshop at Skyfields Arboretum with tracking expert Paul Wanta. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to noon, at the trust's headquarters located at 1461 Old Keene Road.

The group will explore the trails of the open meadows and the woods and wetlands of the Lawton State Forest while looking for signs of wildlife. The workshop teaches basic skills on how to spot, identify, and interpret different tracks found during the winter season. Marielena Lima, Communications and Engagement Coordinator says, "This is a great opportunity to learn a skill that most are not familiar with anymore and discover what animals call these woods home". The tracking workshop has been put on by the trust for numerous winters. Last year, attendees were able to spot and follow signs of rabbits, deer, wild turkeys, and porcupine.

This event is open to the public, free to Mount Grace members, and \$10 for non-members. Registration is required and can be done at mount-grace.org. Please register in advance as this workshop is limited to 15 attendees.

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Opinion

Guest Column

HISTORY MATTERS

By John Grimaldi and David Bruce Smith

January 1 to January 15

Whatever you call it: “Continental Colors,” “Congress Flag,” “Cambridge Flag,” or “Grand Union Flag,” it was the first national flag of the United States. According to historical lore, George Washington unveiled it Jan. 1, 1776, during the American Revolution, but the stars and stripes motif encompassed a replica of the British flag in the upper left-hand corner.

“It was sort of a compromise between the radicals who wanted to see a separate nation, and the people who were more conciliatory, and wanted to see some accommodation with the crown,” according to historian and flag expert David Martucci.

The History Channel noted in June of 1777 that “the Continental Congress adopted a resolution stating, ‘the flag of the United States be thirteen alternate stripes red and white’ and that ‘the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation.’”

To learn more, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends Kevin Keim’s and Peter Keim’s “A Grand Old Flag: A History of the United States Through its Flags.”

It is difficult for the iPhone generation to fathom the complexities of communication throughout history. For decades, telephones used hard-wired landlines to commence a call. And before that: the telegraph – an invention by Samuel Finley Breese Morse, who demonstrated its “efficiency” via an electrical impulse on January 6, 1838. It came with a code that Morse created using dots and dashes–instead of the alphabet–to move a message from point A to point B.

He formulated the idea in 1832; by 1838, with the assistance of his two partners, Leonard Gale and Alfred Vail, he had a working model. Morse requested funding from Congress to make the prototype. It included construction of overhead wires between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland, but the legislators demurred.

Five years later, he garnered the approval, and the money, to proceed; on May 24,1844 Morse sent his first telegraphic message: “What hath God wrought.”

For more information, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends Lewis Coe’s “The Telegraph: A History of Morse’s Invention and Its Predecessors in the United States.”

The U.S. Constitution was signed into law by the delegates of the Constitutional Convention in September of 1787. It structured the federal government, explained the essential laws of the country and guaranteed basic rights for every citizen.

But it was not the first American Constitution. That inaugural document was written and adopted on Jan. 14, 1639, by the settlers from the original Massachusetts Bay Colony, who had migrated to the Connecticut River Valley. It was known as the Fundamental Orders.

According to History.com, “Roger Ludlow, a lawyer, wrote much of the Fundamental Orders, and presented a binding and compact frame of government that put the welfare of the community above that of individuals. It was also the first written constitution in the world to declare the modern idea that ‘the foundation of authority is in the free consent of the people.’” In 1662, the Charter of Connecticut superseded the Fundamental Orders, though the majority of the original document’s laws and statutes remained in force until 1818.”

For more information, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends A. Chamberlain’s “The First Constitution Of Connecticut: The Fundamental Orders.”

*History Matters A biweekly column courtesy of The Grateful American Book Prize, which show’s the nation’s children that their past is prelude to their future.*

Letter to the Editor

Let’s summon the better angels of our nature

Given the divisive state our union these days, I recently re-watched Lincoln, Steven Spielberg’s portrayal of our nation’s 16th President and his administration’s efforts to get the 13th Amendment passed. When I saw the film back in 2012, I was struck by the emotions that I witnessed while leaving the theater. We all knew how the story was going to end, but 147 years later, that film brought many of us to tears.

The fact that the director could tap those emotions – so many years later, was not only a testament of Spielberg’s ability to tell a great story, but a reminder of the greatness of the man, who occupied the White House during our nation’s darkest hours. As Americans, we should all be grateful for the decency, humility, and courage of Abraham Lincoln.

As we head towards the inauguration of our 46th president, may we all remember the fragile nature of our democracy and in Lincoln’s words, summon “the better angels of our nature.”

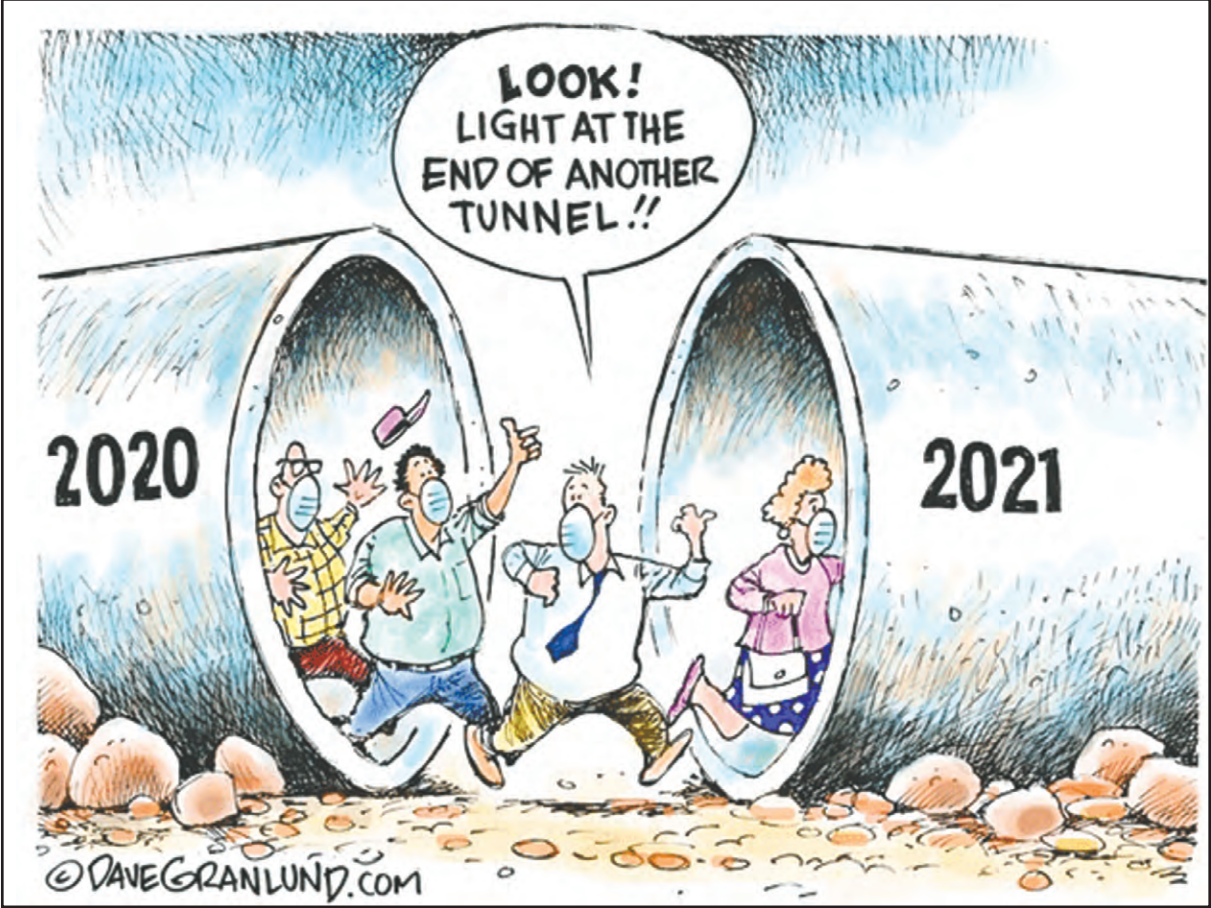
Matt Castriotta  
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PEOPLE/MILESTONE NEWS

As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a “people news” form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content.

For more information, or to submit people or milestone news for the Barre Gazette, please email edowner@turley.com.

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In Past Pages

5 years ago (Jan. 7, 2016)

UMass Dartmouth announces the students named to the 2015 spring dean’s list in recognition of earning a semester grade point average of 3.2 or higher of a possible 4.0. They include: Seth Giard and Emily Hildick, both of North Brookfield and Marina Kowaleski and Derek Juozaitis, both of Rutland.

This fall more than 1,3000 undergraduate students from around the world began their first year at Tufts University, located in Medford/Somerville. Locally, they include Meghan Lauze of Rutland.

The North Brookfield High School has scrapped its existing internship in favor of one it believes will give the seniors more work-place experience and meaningful learning opportunities in the last quarter of the school year. Abigail Rigney, the school’s senior class advisor, mentor coordinator and health teacher, said instead of trying to squeeze in a few hours here or there, it will offer a full four-quarter internship out of the building at participating companies and organizations.

10 years ago (Jan. 13, 2011)

Post 2 Commander Charlie Fullam and Post 404 Commander Al Heyes, announce the consolidation of Barre’ two American Legion Posts.

When Hardwick resident Liz Reilly was on a trip in Egypt with her husband, she tried a dish called “Kushari,” which is a healthful dish of pasta, rice and lentils, commonly served with a tomato sauce and crispy fried onions and is considered the national dish of Egypt. Reilly came up with the idea of having community suppers in town, which she calls “Simple Supper” every Wednesday evening at the Senior Center from 5-6:30 p.m. A group of people will cook the Kushari at the center every Wednesday. Cookies will be served for dessert. The price of the meal is \$1 per person. “This is a community supper for everyone in town who wants to come. The point of the supper is just to get people together and be social,” Reilly said.

In a heartfelt gesture of good will and caring, Old Sturbridge Village employees presented a check for \$2,600 to Richard Fiske Sr., the North Brookfield octogenarian, who founded Heart to Heart. The charitable foundation provides assistance to families of desperately ill and desperately needy children. “This is the largest single donation we’ve ever received,” said a somewhat teary-eyed Fiske. “This has taken me by surprise. I just don’t know how to thank you. Please tell everyone what a wonderful thing

LOOK BACK  
Lotto at the Hot Lunch Program - 1983



Turley Publications File Photo  
**Anthony “Tony” Thompson, otherwise known as “Mr. Bingo” calls numbers in a recent game of Lotto, the Italian form of Bingo played at the hot lunch program on Mechanic Street.**

they’ve done, giving us this gift. We can do so much good with this.”

25 years ago (Jan. 11, 1996)

The Barre Historical Coverlet sold out of its supply just before Christmas, but another order for the popular item will be placed soon. Lois Cooley, president of Women’s Fellowship at the Barre Congregational Church, said when the group planned this project as a fund-raiser they knew it would be popular, but didn’t anticipate such a big demand. The coverlet measures 50 by 65 inches, is woven from 100 percent cotton and is machine washable. It is available in three colors: cranberry red, hunter green and Williamsburg blue. It can be used as a wall hanging or a cozy afghan. A brochure telling about the different buildings comes with the coverlet. The center features the bandstand of Barre Common and the town seal. Barre has been known as the “band concert town of New England.”

The 150th Levee will be held at the Unitarian Church, on the Common in Petersham. Beginning at 5:30 p.m. the ever-popular duo of Kathleen Downey, flute, and Arthur Perkins, piano, will entertain. Wine and cheese will be served in the parlor. Forsythia will decorate the church and provide a breath of spring. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. in the dining room. Tables will be festively set for a turkey dinner with all the fixings. The festivities will continue with a dance at the Town Hall, with the music of The Rhythm Kings, a popular combo. When the church was dis-

established in 1833, no longer having state support, it became the responsibility of the congregation to raise funds to support the church. The first Levee was held in 1842 and has been an annual event carried on by members and friends of the Petersham Unitarian Church ever since.

The Hubbardston Lions Club nominated Arthur LeBlanc, a police and fire dispatcher, for the Lions Humanitarian Award, for his efforts in saving the life of a Hubbardston Woman last year. The award is presented each year at the mid-winter conference in recognition for humanitarian efforts by a Central Massachusetts resident who is not a Lion or Lioness.

38 years ago (Jan. 13, 1983)

Lisa Ann Rice, a senior at Quabbin Regional High School will attend St. Vincent School of Nursing in Worcester next fall. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert G. Rice of Valley Road, Barre. While at Quabbin she has been active in the following school and civic activities: field hockey for five years, French club, a secretary for the National Honor Society, treasurer for the varsity club, a member of the Quabbin Conservation Corps and a nurses aide in school and she studied ballet at the Central Mass. School of Ballet and is also a member of the choir of Christ Church Episcopal in South Barre.

Barre Selectmen voted to put an article on the town warrant for the annual town meeting to consider a proposal to add Williamsville-Templeton Road to a list of scenic roads in the town. The Board received a letter from the Conservation Commission endorsing the proposal unanimously. A petition from 29 residents of the Williamsville section of the town was also received. They had requested that the article be added to the warrant on the next special town meeting.

As the polka band played “Happy Days Are Here Again” and balloons floated down from a second floor window of the Town House, Senator Robert D. Wetmore (D-Barre) greeted King Lion Joseph Grondin and Selectman J. Howard Thompson. The event was the official delivery of the Lion sponsored Elderbus to the town of Barre. Shortly afterward the keys of the vehicle were presented by the Lions Club to Thompson who accepted on behalf of the town. Wetmore and Thompson then each took turns using the Elderbus’ hydraulic wheelchair lift as a platform to address the crowd of senior citizens and other well-wishers gathered for the event.

Guest column

Adventures of Gertrude the Cat

By Ruth Robinson

Dear Folks,

Things around the house this morning have been different. Missy and her friend are returning things to normal. I am watching the whole procedure from the back of the couch where I am out of the way.

They have taken all the Christmas decorations down from the walls and off the tree and packed them up in boxes for next year. Then they pulled that special tree through the living room out to the backyard so Missy said.

The next thing I knew the attic door was open and they were taking boxes up there. O boy, here is my chance to sneak up there before Missy sees me. Whoops, there is no heat up here and it is freezing. So I scampered right back down to my perch on the couch.

Then I saw Missy moving a thing of some sort around the rug and it made a lot of noise. I heard her tell her friend that she hoped she got all those pesky tree needles picked up. Then the furniture was replaced where it should be and things slowed down to a normal pace.

I heard Missy and her friend talking over coffee about the New Year coming in. Year? I don’t know what that is and I don’t remember it hurting me in anyway. So I guess nothing is really changing for me. However, I hope Missy gets some different food for me soon. I don’t like the latest kind. Ugh, I hope she gets the kind I like and gives me some treats. They have been missing the last few days.

I will miss that old tree this week as I won’t be able to get an extra drink form the water bucket or jiggle the lower tree branches. I only had trouble with those once and got royally scolded by Missy. I know Missy likes me to catch mice for her, but isn’t always too happy with all my weekly mischief.

Enjoy the New Year folks and stay healthy.

Love,  
Gertrude



Column

All-America Selections for 2021 named

With the holidays behind us it’s time for a pick-me-up. Nothing cheers me more than dreaming about my next garden. I love the early planning stage most of all and it starts about this time each year. Seed catalogs begin to arrive in the mail and the glossy photos and “flowery” dialogue lure me to open the pages and curl up with a notebook and a warm cup of tea. I began this yearly ritual over three decades ago and it never grows old. Perhaps you are a like-minded soul who also thinks this is a good way to pass a cold winter evening.

When perusing the catalog, no doubt you will come across the All-America Selections badge of honor next to certain flower, herb, perennial or vegetable varieties.

See GARDEN, page 5

IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid  
Columnist

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## Serenity Hill Sampler

by Jane McCauley

Have you been remembering to write 2021 on your checks and letters you write? I usually try to put the year date on the checks ahead of time so I won't forget. I got the real estate bill and also wrote the due date on the calendar so I don't forget to pay it by Feb. 1. That happened one year and I got a fine.

I have put all Christmas things away and left out the snowmen village. I put Valentines that I made last year from fabric on the Christmas tree and left the lights on. Under the tree I have an owl given to me by a friend sitting on a sled with a Valentine coming out of his mouth like he was delivering it to a friend. I made a tree skirt with Valentine fabric and also a pillow with white buttons sewed on it in the shape of a heart.

My big project this week was to "canned" my relatives. I took old canning jars and put a black and white photograph of each of my immediate family and placed one in each canning jar. The jars were then placed on a shelf in my hall office. A picture of the jars is attached. One aunt I mentioned this to said she did not want to be canned and another friend commented "that got you out of hot water." It was just a fun project.

My friend Nancy gave me this recipe and I think the readers would enjoy making them. She called them Big Breakfast Cookies, but I think they could be eaten any time of the day and have a lot of good ingredients in them. I am sure some things could be left off if you don't have them. For instance I don't happen to have coconut on hand.



Turley Publications Courtesy Photo

Here are the relatives with their pictures in canning jars.

### BIG BREAKFAST COOKIES

3 very ripe bananas  
1-1/2 cups rolled oats (not instant)  
1/4 cup creamy peanut butter  
1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
pinch salt  
1-1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 cup unsweetened coconut flakes or chips  
1/2 cup coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts

1/3 cup dried fruit, such as raisins, cranberries or chopped apricots

Preheat oven to 350 degrees; line a cookie sheet with parchment. Mash bananas, then combine in a large bowl with the remaining ingredients. Drop by 1/4 cup scoopfuls onto cookie sheet; they don't spread so can be placed close together. Bake 22 to 25 minutes; cool on wire rack before eating.

### This and That

This week's project is to make a scrapbook. I have a box of Scrapbook material that I got last

Christmas and need to do something with it. Because I got some ink cartridges for Christmas, I can copy a lot of photographs and use them to make interesting scrapbooks for the grandchildren. I was going through their notebooks that I kept over the years and have some interesting things to copy. I especially liked the cute letters and pictures they made for me. Now that they are young adults they will get a kick out of some of the items.

Having to stay in, I am glad that I have a lot of hobbies. Some of my friends are very bored. I did spend a couple of warmer days out in the backyard piling all the broken off pine branches. The burning season starts Jan. 15 so hopefully we can get rid of them. It is a big mess. It was the first snowstorm with heavy wet snow that caused the problem. The 10 inches of snow stayed on the branches for a week without thawing.

Have a good week and find things to keep you busy. Keep your masks on and we are still waiting for the vaccine.

## HARDWICK continued from page 1

ambulances, one at the public safety complex on South Street and one at their School Street station. They have a paramedic on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week and an EMT from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. At 9 p.m., they have two on-call EMTs. He said they can staff two ambulances during the day, one at ALS level and one at BLS level. Rogowski said they have about 15 on-call EMTs in addition to himself, a full-time paramedic and per diem paramedics.

Rogowski noted that Hardwick cannot currently provide true "mutual" EMS aid to Barre right

now (like they do with fire), as they do not have an ambulance to send. McCall said he does not currently have a mutual aid agreement on file with Barre, but that he would certainly sign one. West Brookfield does have a mutual aid agreement with Ware already. Quink said the board has talked about having a "plan b" for EMS, and questioned if that plan includes Ware. Kemp said that if they built a plan with West Brookfield, and Barre provided mutual aid response, maybe Ware would be willing to provide mutual aid response also.

Quink asked McCall how close they were to becoming ALS certified. McCall said they are hoping

for fall of 2021. He said himself, and two others are close to graduating the program. McCall said originally they were planning on being ALS certified in spring of 2021, but with COVID-19 they have been a bit delayed.

Young asked McCall to submit a written a proposal to the board to see what costs Hardwick would incur. Young said he's hoping they would have an agreement in place by spring, if not sooner. Young said he still wants to circle back with Barre about covering the Wheelwright portion of town. McCall said he would contact Rogowski and give Hardwick selectmen a written proposal by the end of the week.

## HUBBARDSTON continued from page 1

pond with a dam. Galante said the cost of repair was about one million.

He said there were two dams on the pond. The other was owned by an entity in Barre as a trust and was also in need of repair. Galante said the dams can not be fixed one at a time, but fix both at the same time to get a permit. He said the town could receive the land owned by Fisheries and Wildlife and the other entity and have property owners on the pond form a trust.

### Host Agreement Agreement amendment

The town administrator said Boey Bertold of Paper Crane Cannabis, 56 Gardner Road, gave the town \$3,000 for postage for mailings regarding hearings and community outreach meetings. They will also be posted on Facebook and the town website. The town administrator would be sending out postcards per a resident request at the last community outreach meeting for a courier license, a change to the existing license request. Selectmen will vote on the HCA amendment at their next meet-

ing. Town counsel already vetted the amendment.

### COVID update

Town administrator McLane said Hubbardston was a green community and had 13 new positive cases with a 4% positivity rate. Currently, there were 12 current cases. He said Barre was yellow and Gardner, Rutland and Westminster were red communities. He said one case could close town offices including police and Department of Public Works. He said the goal was to keep everyone safe as possible. There were not many green or gray towns in the Commonwealth now.

Let's learn more about two of this year's winners.

Celosia Kelos Candela Pink is a 2021 AAS flower winner. For those of you who know and love plumed celosia, this is your pick. Judges touted this plant as an "Energizer Bunny" bloom-wise. Foot tall bright deep pink flower spikes rise above foliage that tops off just under two and a half feet tall. Flowers are long-lasting and unlike some celosia, keep their color throughout the season. Judges agree that Kelos Candela Pink is great filler for mixed containers, adding height and textural interest but it also succeeds as a landscape plant either in mass plantings or borders. Reportedly it also dries well too, although I will believe it when I try it for myself since most celosia are prone to shattering. This AAS winner is available in plant form only.

Another winner that I am very excited about is Zinnia Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor. This new addition to the ever-popular floriferous and disease resistant 'Profusion' series starts out with a vibrant red center surrounded by golden yellow petals only to transform into shades of pink, apricot and salmon as it ages. Perhaps the next

best attribute of this winner after its alter color ego is that it maintains a compact size of about a foot tall. This winner is versatile, too, succeeding in containers, hanging baskets, mixed plantings and en masse. Another bonus: pollinators love it! Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor is also the recipient of the Fleuroselect Gold Medal award for performance in European trials.

Because testing is local, I feel confident when I purchase plants or seeds of past or present AAS winners and with proper care they should live up to their description in my own garden. For more information and a full list of winners past and present, log on to [www.all-americaselections.org](http://www.all-americaselections.org). Here you will find many steady Eddies of the garden world.

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [ekenedy@turley.com](mailto:ekenedy@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*

## In My Backyard by Ellenor Downer

A West Brookfield couple emailed about the birds at their backyard feeders. They said, "The most remarkable to us are the thirteen bluebirds, who appear to be wintering here. They perch in a tree near the feeders every morning, awaiting the husband's appearance. He walks across the backyard, puts the food out, and before he's halfway back into the kitchen they swoop in en masse. They scold him if he's late."

The day after Christmas I had six bluebirds at my suet feeder. There were males and females. I have not seen them since.

### Eastern bluebird

The Eastern bluebird is 6 1/2 inches long. The male has a brilliant, blue head, back, wings and tail and a brick-red throat and breast. The female has a rich throat and breast, grayish-blue head and back and light blue wings and tail. She also has a white-eye ring. The color on the female upper parts varies from a blue to grayish-brown.

Bluebirds feed from perches, dropping down to the ground to catch insects. They may come to

feeders for peanut butter mixes, berries, mealworms or raisins. The suet cake they came to in the yard was a berry mix.

The female lays three to six pale blue eggs in a nest of grasses, plant stems, pine needles lined with hair, feathers and fine grasses. They place the nest in a birdhouse, natural tree cavity or abandoned woodpecker hole. They inhabit farmland, rural yards and open woodland. There song is a series of down slurred whistles like "cheer cheerful charmer" and the call is a "turwee."

Bluebird populations severely declined due to loss of nesting cavities and nest competition until the 1970s. In 1978, the North American Bluebird Society was formed. This society, along with many others, placed bluebird nesting boxes all across the country. This is helping bluebird populations recover.

### Christmas card bird count

Every year since "Stace" Crawford introduced me to the Christmas card bird count, I tallied birds on my Christmas cards. This year I had a pair of cardinals – male and female, a black-

capped chickadee, a dove and a non-descriptive species.

### Wheelwright birds

I received an email from a Wheelwright resident. He wrote, "This past week in my backyard viewed from my second floor office window I saw a variety of wildlife - Cooper's hawk, red tailed hawk, one otter, one mink, five white tailed deer together feeding on grass in the field and a bald eagle." He said there was lots of daily activity to view and he has a dozen feeders out back that he tend to daily. He enjoys watching the birds.

### Other birds

I have a lone chipping sparrow with juncos and chickadees feeding on the ground under my feeder.

Sunday I saw a flock of about eight wild Tom turkeys in a field near the State Police Academy in New Braintree.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100 or emailing [mybackyard88@aol.com](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com).

## Hardwick Board of Selectmen notebook

By Paula Ouimette  
Staff writer

### Right of first refusal waived

The Board of Selectmen was presented with a waiver of right of first refusal Chapter 61A for the Robinson property, known as lots 3A and 3B on North Road. Board of Selectmen Chairman Kenan Young said that all involved department have signed off on this. Board of Selectmen member Julie Quink made a motion to waive their right of first refusal for the North Road property. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

### License renewals

Selectmen approved the Class III annual motor vehicle license for Leo Tamkus, d/b/a L & S Used

Auto Parts, 51 Cleveland Road, Wheelwright.

### Mayflower quotes accepted

The Board of Selectmen approved the Board of Assessors recommendation to accept quotes from Mayflower Valuation Inc. for fiscal 2022. The selectmen approved the quotes, which totaled \$3,600.

### COVID-19 policies

The Board of Selectmen approved the adoption of new COVID-19 workplace policies for town employees. Employees would be required to fill out a survey daily. Each department head would keep those surveys on file for their department.

### EMS correspondence

Julie Quink said the board received an anonymous letter from a concerned citizen, in regard

to emergency medical services provided by West Brookfield Rescue Squad. Quink said that West Brookfield Rescue Squad President, Dan McCall will address the concerns stated in the letter. The contents of the letter were not discussed at the meeting. Quink said she will also reach out to the state's Office of Emergency Management Services to see if there is any validity to the claims of the letter writer.

### Upcoming meetings

The Board of Selectmen will meet on Monday, Jan. 11 and Monday, Jan. 25 via Microsoft Teams. Information about joining the meetings and the agendas can be found on the town website, [www.townofhardwick.com](http://www.townofhardwick.com) under Calendar.

## National Technology and Development Program celebrates 75 years

Since 1945, the USDA Forest Service's National Technology and Development Program has harnessed the latest technological advances to help the agency and its partners solve complex technological problems. As 2020 draws to a close, the Forest Service reflects on 75 years of the program finding innovative and practical ways to better manage public lands, protect resources and save lives.

After the program began during World War II, the Forest Service established "Equipment and Development Centers" in Montana and California, which were tasked with repurposing surplus military equipment and advancing knowledge and techniques to better fight wildfires. These centers pioneered many of the life- and cost-saving advances firefighters use today, such as standardized hoses, pumps, rap-

elling and parachuting equipment as well as the interagency wildland fire shelter - credited with saving more than 300 lives.

"We create friction and encourage failure," said program director Alex Gavrishoff, referring to the battery of tests the program's staff design to push products beyond their limits. "We fail, so others don't."

The centers' scope eventually expanded to include forest management, recreation, engineering and more. The National Technology and Development Program now categorizes its work within three areas: application of innovative science and technology, knowledge synthesis and specifications and standards.

The product specifications developed by the program have saved the Forest Service about \$40 million a year through centralized purchasing and inven-

tory management. Rigorous product testing and consultation with private industry also ensures commercial products can meet the needs and demands of employees doing work on the ground.

The program also maintains an extensive online library (<https://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/>) of its findings, and regularly shares its knowledge and collaborates with other national and international government agencies on projects.

"As technology has advanced, so has the scope and depth of the National Technology and Development Program," Gavrishoff said. "It's been an incredible 75 years, and we're excited for what the future holds for technology and how we can bring that to the Forest Service, the land that it cares for and the people it serves."

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# Where is this?



Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

This week’s mystery photo is from New Braintree. If any readers know where this photo was taken, they may email [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or call the Barre Gazette at 413-967-3505, extension 100 with their answer by noon on Monday, Jan. 11. The names of those that correctly guessed the location will appear in next week’s edition. Dick Clark, Stephen Craven, Jane McCauley, Billy Paquette, Bruce Towner and Jeremy Varnum correctly identified the photo. Last week’s photo was the basketball court at the Hubbardston Center School, Elm Street, Hubbardston.

## Victoria Graffam joins Country Bank as new BSA officer

WARE – Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, announces Victoria Graffam has joined its Corporate Risk Division. Graffam held various BSA and loss prevention roles before joining Berkshire Bank in 2017 as the BSA/AML EDD manager. While at Berkshire Bank, her focus was to develop and maintain a program to identify and mitigate risk for higher-risk customers. She is also a member of the Association for Certified Anti Money Laundering Specialists.

“I am passionate about inclu-

sion and the value in having different perspectives as it pertains to combating various forms of fraud. I believe that when we work together sharing our experiences and knowledge, we all contribute to making well-rounded decisions,” stated Graffam.

“We are excited to welcome Victoria to Country Bank; she brings over thirty years of professional experience with twenty years in Community Banking and is a perfect cultural fit for our team. Her ‘can do’ attitude, commitment to customer service, and collaborative management approach

aligns perfectly with our iSTEP Corporate Values of Integrity, Service, Teamwork, Excellence and Prosperity. We are proud that Victoria has chosen Country Bank to be her employer of choice,” stated Miriam Siegel, senior vice president of human resources at Country Bank.

Country Bank is a full-service mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton and Worcester.

## OAKHAM YIR, continued from page 1

school district will continue to implement the remote learning plan it launched April 13.

Town clerk Chris Mardirosian announced the last day to register to vote for the annual town election is Tuesday, April 28. Positions on the ballot include a two-year term to the board of health, one position each to board of selectmen, board of assessors, board of health, library trustees, cemetery commission and school committee, all three-year terms and a five-year planning board.

### May

The Oakham Board of Selectmen voted to sign the warrant for the town election on May 18 at its May 4 meeting. Polling hours will be noon-4 p.m. instead of the usual 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Selectmen also voted to form a Cable Access Committee. Several residents not served by cable access contacted selectmen about the situation especially in light of so many working remotely from home. Resident Jessica Buzzell, a resident who does not have cable access, said remote learning puts students without Internet at a disadvantage.

Due to a Zoom meeting, the board of selectmen set Tuesday, June 30 as the time for its Annual Town Meeting. They also will hold a Special Town Meeting with one article first to correct an error in wording of funding for a highway truck voted at last year’s town meeting and approved as a debt exclusion at a special town election last September.

Ninety-one or just 15 percent of the 1,354 registered voters went to the poll to vote in the annual May 18 town election. There were no contests on the ballot and several positions were blank. Donald A. Haapakoski received 68 votes for a three-year term to the board of selectmen and Ariana R. O’Neil had 76 votes for a three-year term to the board of health. Others elected included Susan M. Meyer with 87 votes as library trustee, Walter H. Nutter with 85 votes to school committee and Phillip B. Warbasse with 85 votes for a five-year planning board member. A two-year term to the board of health, a three-year term to the board of assessors and a three-year term to the cemetery commission were blank on the ballot. Dennis Bergin received 18 write in votes for a three-year term as moderator.

### June

Aaron Langlois, public health nurse for Oakham, said the total number of COVID-19 cases for the town remained at six. He said three cases are active and one of the three would be off the active list soon.

Town accountant Thomas Wilson said the elementary school roof debt ended this year. He recommended the town go with the

Quabbin school assessment. He said he doubted Hardwick and Hubbardston would approve the amount presented by the school committee. He said it would spare Oakham having to hold an extra town meeting. The finance committee also recommended the school requested amount. Selectmen chair Bradford Taylor said he recommended a 2.5 percent increase for the school. It would save the town about \$85,000.

Aaron Langlois, public health nurse, said the COVID-19 number was seven. He said the Department of Public Health was recommending that anyone that attended a large gathering get tested for COVID-19 at a testing center.

Selectman chair Bradford Taylor said he received a note from the police department that there were more problems a the town beach. He said town counsel KPLaw determined the property known as town beach was not transferred and the town owns the beach on Lake Dean. Taylor said no taxes were ever paid by the person, who believes owns it. He said, “It is time to put [the issue] to bed so the police department doesn’t get called to straighten out a situation.” Selectmen Lucy Tessnau and Donald Haapakoski agreed.

Fobes Memorial Library director, Samantha Bodine, asked selectmen for permission to place posts containing storybook pages on town property. She said the Oakham Cultural Council gave permission for the library to repurpose grants it received as the library cancelled all events for 2020. She said the library would change the story every two to three weeks.

Over 40 people wearing masks attended the Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting June 30. At the ATM, the town and school budgets garnered the most discussion. The finance committee and board of selectmen met before the start of the STM. They agreed to use the board of selectmen figure on Article 6, the general town budget, a total of \$1,403,188.61. With the school budget, finance committee chair Paul Rochette to amend the amount to \$2,656,840. It passed and it restored the school budget to the amount requested by the school committee.

Selectman chair Bradford Taylor discussed the possibility of holding selectmen’s meetings at the town hall in a few weeks. He said the town hall would remain closed until the board hired a janitor for the town hall and library. Selectmen decided to post the position for ten hours per week.

The town public health nurse said there were two new cases of COVID-19 in town last week. This brings the total positive cases to nine with seven recovered and two active.

Selectmen awarded fuel oil, diesel fuel and propane bids to R.J. McDonald, Inc. of Barre. They awarded the gasoline bid to Burke, the state bid.

### August

On Wednesday, August 5, Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and member from the jail farming staff dropped off freshly picked prison produce at the Oakham Senior Center. The center received approximately one hundred to two hundred pounds of fresh organic produce grown at the jail.

An oak tree and pine tree landed on the power lines and blocked Parmenter Road in Oakham. The

tree caused a power outage Aug. 24.

### September

In the Sept. 1 primary election, Oakham had a 36% voter turnout with 494 of its 1,384 registered voters going to the polls. Results on the Democrat side for Senator in Congress were 152 votes for Edward J. Markey and 170 for Joseph P. Kennedy III. James P. McGovern got 286 votes for Representative in Congress. On the state side Paul M. DePalo received 170 votes and Padraic Rafferty got 107 for Councilor seventh district. Anne Gobi received 301 for Senator in General Court. and Samuel Biagetti got 255 for Representative in General Court. John B. Dolan III received 157 votes and Kasai Wennerberg to 116 votes for Register of Probate. On the Republican ballot Shiva Aryadurai received 89 votes and Kevin J. O’Connor got 85 votes for Senator in Congress. Tracy Lyn Lovvorn got 162 votes for Representative in Congress. On the state side there was no Republican candidate for Councilor seventh district. Steven R. Hall had 155 votes for Senator in General Court. Donald R. Berthiaume Jr. received 163 votes for Representative in General Court. Stephanie K. Fattman got 164 votes for Register of Probate. Sunday School resumed at the Oakham Congregational Church Sunday, Sept. 13. It will be held outside weather permitting.

### October

The first ever Jeff Young Memorial Golf Tournament will be held Oct. 17 at Quail Hollow Golf Course. The tournament is being organized by the Young family to benefit the Oakham Historical Association, where Young served as president for 23 years. An early season snowstorm happened Friday, Oct. 30. Snow started in the morning and continued until the afternoon. Snow depth ranged from 2 to 6 inches. It was just one of a few October snowstorms. The big one in recent memory was the Oct. 20-30 storm in 2011, which dumped up to two feet of snow in parts of Central Massachusetts. Trick or treating was held Saturday, Oct. 31 from 5-7 p.m. There was no parade this year.

### November

Unofficial Nov. 3 election results for Oakham were President and Vice President Biden/Harris 553, Trump/Pence 663, Hawkins/Walker 7, Jorgensen/Cohen 29; Senator in Congress Edward Markey 569 and Kevin O’Connor 640; Representatives in Congress James McGovern 591, Tracy Lovvorn 637; Councilor – 7th District Paul DePalo 767; Senator in General Court Anne Gobi 641, Steven Hall 579; Representatives in General Court Donald Berthiaume Jr. 766, Samuel Biagetti 432; Register of Probate Stephanie Fattman 710, John Dolan 398; Pathfinder School Committee” Belchertown F.Deli Olio 777, Palmer David Droz 726, New Braintree two write ins, Oakham Jeffrey Nelson 7 write ins, Question 1: Yes 832, No 373 and Question 2: Yes 327, No 868. Thirty-eight voters came out Monday, Nov. 9 for a Special Town Meeting. The first article asked voters to reduce the appropriation for the Quabbin Regional School District voted at town meeting by \$103,000. The school committee voted a lower assessment after Oakham’s ATM. Voters transferred the \$103,000 to seven other accounts. Voters approved the second and final article to transfer \$50,000 from the equipment reserve to purchase a new police utility vehicle.

### December

The Oakham Parks and Recreation Committee held a “Light up Oakham” contest Dec. 5 through 12. People may vote for their favorites. East Quabbin Land Trust held a trail building for a new trail on land it acquired in Oakham as a gift from Eva Grimes. Volunteers meet at Ware Corner Road. The Oakham Congregational Church held a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Thursday, Dec. 24.

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## Football committee mulls tourney options

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – While the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is just hoping to have a regular football season much like the fall and winter modified seasons, the Tournament Management Committee and Football Committee of the MIAA is thinking about life after the pandemic.

The pandemic took away the traditional 2020 fall season and football is supposed to take place during a Fall 2 or “bubble” season, which begins in late February.

However, assuming, in the fall of 2021, when high schools are seemingly going to be able to play under normal conditions and with a normal schedule that includes tournaments, a new football tournament will be forthcoming.

It seems like long time ago that the member schools of the MIAA voted in favor of dropping the sectional tournaments in favor of one statewide tournament, that in the case of many sports, will include a 32-team bracket with the opportunity to play in if a team finishes with a .500 record.

But in football, a .500 record does not guarantee entrée into the tournament. That has always been the case as Western Massachusetts football teams had a ranking system that put the top four teams in each division in the playoffs. Football also had more than the four divisions many other sports like soccer and basketball have.

The Football Committee of the MIAA began meeting recently about the issue. One plan was



Options for a new football playoff format, which will feature a state-wide tournament beginning in the fall, are being considered.

presented by the Massachusetts High School Football Coaches Association.

The plan would have a 10-game, but 12-week regular season concluding on Thanksgiving. In recent years, the regular season was ended after eight games, with qualifying teams playing playoff games in weeks 9 and 10, the state semifinals between Week 10 and Thanksgiving, and Thanksgiving Day's game a simple exhibition. In a lot of cases, teams qualifying for state final games would not play

regulars on Thanksgiving to guarantee health in the state finals.

The coaches' association proposal would restore Thanksgiving as a regular season game. The association also submitted a plan for a nine-game schedule with playoffs starting before Thanksgiving and finishing after as it is currently constituted.

A group of Eastern Mass. coaches and athletic directors have also developed seven and eight-game proposals that would entail having 16 teams qualifying for a state



Could rival matchups on Thanksgiving be in danger depending on what direction the MIAA goes in for playoffs.

tournament in each division under the seven game, and eight teams per division in the eight-game season. Under both proposals the state finals would actually take place before Thanksgiving, and teams would again play Thanksgiving games as exhibitions.

With all the proposals out, the Football Committee has developed a survey to be sent to principals and athletic directors for feedback. A decision on the playoff format will hopefully be made sometime in the spring in time for scheduling to

take place.

As of press time, the MIAA has not made any decision about any type of playoffs for the modified football season taking place in February. There will be no playoffs for the winter season, and the fall season also did not have any tournaments.

Arguments against extending the football season further into December specifically include making winter athletes wait too long between seasons to start basketball, hockey, and wrestling.

## Region dealt major blow as T-Birds cancel season

SPRINGFIELD – This week, the Springfield Thunderbirds announced that they are one of three AHL franchises that have elected to opt out of play for the upcoming 2020-2021 season. The decision, made in conjunction with their NHL Affiliate, the St. Louis Blues, was based on numerous safety and logistical concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic and will allow the organization to turn its full focus towards the 2021-22 season. The Thunderbirds will maintain their status as active members of the AHL and return to play next season.

Thunderbirds President, Nathan Costa offered the following statement about the decision:

“Over the past few months we have worked tirelessly with the St. Louis Blues to explore every possible avenue for returning to play this season. Unfortunately, due to health and safety concerns, travel logistics, new player supply rules, and other

considerations the Blues and Thunderbirds collectively determined that it was in the best interests of all parties to opt out for this season. Given the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic in Massachusetts, it has also become clear that we will be unable to host fans at our games in the foreseeable future. As an independently-owned franchise, our foremost obligation is to ensure that our team is financially viable for the long term, something that is not possible without gameday revenue. Our organization has built one of the most exciting stories in all of professional hockey and remains as committed as ever to building upon that success in Springfield. We continue to have a strong relationship with the St. Louis Blues, the City of Springfield, the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, and all those who have both been helpful and supportive during this time. We have

See T-BIRDS, page 8

## Thompson to hold virtual race series

THOMPSON, Conn. -- Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park will come to virtual life three times during the winter months, as a new iRacing series will give drivers and fans a chance to prepare for the 2021 season. In a series promoted by Souza Media, full-time Modified, Late Model & Super Late Model drivers from across New England will compete in three different races -- including the virtual historic Thompson 300 -- with one-race in January, another in February and a final in March.

The series will help preview the real-life season at Thompson for 2021 -- which is slated to begin with the annual Icebreaker weekend from April 9-11, and hold six oval events, promoted by the American Canadian Tour and Pro All Star Series. All three iRacing events will take place on Saturday, Jan. 23, Feb. 20 and March 20 -- and will all begin with the drop of the green flag at 2 p.m. The feature races will air live, in full, on Extreme Sim TV, via Facebook and YouTube. Qualifying heat races, consolation races and a B-Main will be conducted prior to the broadcast start.

The three iRacing events will



### Virtual Thompson iRacing Series

Three races previewing 2021

January 23 - SK Modified 100

February 20 - Late Model 100

March 20 - Virtual Thompson 300

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Submitted photo

A virtual racing series is set to take place later this month.

include an opener with iRacing's SK Modified, previewing the Sunoco Modified season at Thompson, on January 23, for a 100-lap event. The second will put some of New England's best Late Model stars together in ACT-style Late Models for their own 100-lapper on February 20. The

final will help promote and preview the return of the historic Thompson 300, as Tour-Type Modifieds are used for a virtual 300-lapper on March 20. In real-life, officials are bringing back the Thompson 300 as part of the Sunoco World Series

See RACING, page 8

## Pioneers to host Pelham clinic

LUDLOW – Western United Pioneers FC is excited to offer a soccer clinic in Pelham, MA for players in the Massachusetts North Region. The fall clinic provides off-season training and skill development by WUP FC coaches. There are two sessions available, sign up for one or both. It makes a great holiday gift for friends and family members.

This program is offered to boys and girls born in 2010,

2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. The four-week program includes one practice per week for a total of \$65 per session (\$130 for 2 sessions). Sessions will consist of a max of 15 players per field (COVID regulation for the players' safety).

**SESSION 1:**  
MONDAYS 1/11, 1/25, 2/1, & 2/8  
Boys and Girls Born 2013 and 2014: Session is at 5 p.m.  
Boys and Girls Born 2010,

2011, and 2012: Session is at 6 p.m.

**SESSION 2:**  
MONDAYS 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, & 3/15  
Boys and Girls Born 2013 and 2014: Session is at 5 p.m.

Boys and Girls Born 2010, 2011, and 2012: Session is at 6 p.m.

The sessions will be held at Pelham Elementary School at 45 Amherst Road, Pelham, MA 01002.

## New umpires needed for 2021 season

REGION – The Western Massachusetts Baseball Umpire Association is looking for individuals who are interested in umpiring baseball at the high school and youth level. The WMBUA services high school baseball and various other leagues in the Greater Springfield area/ Hampden County.

The WMBUA's first year members class will be held for roughly five to six weeks, beginning in February. The class dates right now are fluid as the organization monitors what happens with the COVID-

19 pandemic. Class is usually one or two nights per week from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The class takes place in the First Baptist Church of East Longmeadow's classrooms at 50 Parker Street. Classes may also be virtual if COVID-19 does not allow for in-person meetings.

If you are interested in taking the classes, contact Chris Meffen, the WMBUA Secretary, via email at [cmeffen8017@gmail.com](mailto:cmeffen8017@gmail.com) or visit the WMBUA website at <http://wmbua.org>.

## Winter sports scheduled to begin next week

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – Winter sports are scheduled to get underway next week, with practices beginning on Jan. 11.

Practices were originally scheduled to start on Jan. 4, but the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference made the decision to move back a week, though at this point, it is very unclear how many schools will be participating in the winter season and whether or not those teams will have to further modify schedules.

While the PVIAC wanted to give Western Mass. schools time during the month of December to secure permission to play sports through school committees, health departments, and other public officials, some of those permissions were contingent on the various criteria surrounding current coronavirus cases.

In the case of Holyoke, the city needed to be out of the “red” and no longer labeled a high-risk community by Dec. 24, and remain out of the red for three weeks in order to begin practices on Jan. 11. However, that has not happened.

Additionally, schools like West Springfield and Belchertown are among those that will not play communities that are red, further complicating the scheduling.

As of the Dec. 31 Department of Public Health report, most town and cities in Western Massachusetts in Hampden and Hampshire County are in the red and considered high-risk as the second surge continues, especially with rising numbers following the holiday season.

Some schools also have agreements with teachers' unions regarding how schools will proceed in the event a community goes into the red. In many cases, a high school's coaching staff is included in the union negotiations.

In one bubble, Agawam, Westfield, and West Springfield all have permission to play, but Hampshire, Holyoke, and Northampton are question marks.

There are also further modifications for the ice hockey schedule as fewer schools have hockey programs in Western Massachusetts. One thing you will not see in the modified winter season is a team like Agawam or Minnechaug making its way to the other side of the state to play other teams in Central and Eastern Mass. Bubble play is limited to teams in the region. One bubble will feature all of the teams in the Berry Division,

See WINTER SPORTS, page 8

## Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching “turleysports.” We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and share with your friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections in the coming weeks, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

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Education

QCC’s practical nursing students help administer COVID-19 vaccines

Worcester – Quinsigamond Community College practical nursing students are now part of history. On Dec.18, eight practical nursing students along with their instructors Margaret “Meg” Yoder, professor of Nurse Education and faculty member Christian Ilustre helped administer approximately 100 COVID-19 vaccines to Harrington Hospital employees at the Southbridge Armory. They worked with over a dozen Harrington nurses, who also included a couple of QCC graduates, according to Professor Yoder.

Healthcare workers are the first to be vaccinated in the U.S. and Harrington employees, who were vaccinated included doctors, nurses and other frontline workers at Harrington Healthcare and Harrington Physician Services.

“Our entire college community feels tremendous pride knowing our nursing students are playing such a vital role in our nation’s history,” said QCC President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D. “So many of our students are frontline workers who are essential to the safety and well-being of our community. They emulate what it means to be a Wyvern - QCC’s mascot that is a symbol for community guardianship.”

“This is our community and having the opportunity to engage the practical nursing students in this historic moment, serving our community is immeasurable,” said Professor Yoder. “The practical nursing students of the Class



Turley Publications Courtesy Photo

QCC practical nursing students prepare COVID-19 vaccines.

of 2021 are experiencing many firsts that will provide them with a resiliency unlike any other.”

The QCC students not only administered the vaccine, they performed intake assessments, gave educational information and observed vaccine recipients post vaccination. This type of hands-on training enables students to stay current with workforce needs and makes them valuable employees when they enter the workforce because they require less training.

“Clinical experiences and opportunities are so important for all of our healthcare students. Harrington Hospital has been one of our most valuable partners during these past several months and we are honored

to have been asked to assist at their COVID vaccine clinics,” said Dean of the School of Healthcare, Pat Schmohl. “Our practical nursing students are learning firsthand the importance of community-based public health initiatives. We have procedures in place to keep our students safe while they are participating in these critical in-person clinical opportunities.”

“At a time when clinical placements are difficult to find, Harrington Hospital has remained committed to providing QCC students with face-to-face opportunities. We could not be more grateful,” Professor Yoder added.

QCC students will continue to assist with the vaccination

process throughout the remainder of the year and through April.

“Encouraging service to our community is an integral piece of living QCC’s mission, one of our core values. Today was just the beginning. All of our students will be provided with this opportunity. In the future, we will be administering the vaccine to front line workers, EMTs, police and fire and high risk vulnerable populations,” Professor Yoder said, adding that the students were excited to be part of this historical moment. For more information about QCC, people may contact Josh Martin, director of institutional communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

Registration open for adult learning program

FITCHBURG — Brush up on your conversational French or Spanish, learn about scientific principles that affect our daily lives, get tips on how to de-clutter your life or learn how to play the ukulele through Fitchburg State University’s Adult Learning in the Fitchburg Area (ALFA) program.

Registration is now open for ALFA’s spring courses, which will be offered in remote format. Visitors may register online at marketplace.fitchburg-state.edu/alfa. Most courses are just \$40 (and free for students over age 90).

ALFA is a lifelong learning institute that serves adult learners in Fitchburg and the surrounding communities. ALFA is sponsored by the School of Graduate, Online, and Continuing Education at Fitchburg State University in collaboration with volunteer members of the community. We offer non-credit daytime classes, trips, special events, and a free speaker series. ALFA students are encouraged to volunteer and participate in program leadership and development, as well as social and recreational activities. A limited number of scholarships are available.

This spring’s varied offerings include crosswords for beginners, Native American basketry, an introduction to yoga, a guide to winter botany, and the history of folk music, along with classes on creative writing, the art and culture of Islam, ancient lore in modern times, and the cinema of Oscar-winning director Bong-Joon Ho, among many other topics. There will also be a free “Food for Thought” lecture on March 30 about abolitionism, emancipation and Civil War memory in Central Massachusetts in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries.

For the full list of programs, and information about the instructors and schedule, people may visit fitchburgstate.edu/alfa.

Also, ALFA is always on the lookout for new instructors and new subject matter to share with its students. Anyone with a specialty that they think others would be interested in should contact the program directors at alfa@fitchburgstate.edu for details about becoming an ALFA instructor. Also, direct any questions to the ALFA office at 978-665-3706, or email at alfa@fitchburgstate.edu.

UVM announces dean’s list

BURLINGTON, VT – The following local students made the fall dean’s list at the University of Vermont. They included: Mary Jean Lapierre of Hubbardston, Hannah Skerry of Barre and Elliot

Walsh of Oakham. To be named to the dean’s list, students must have a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and rank in the top 20 percent of their class in their respective college or school.

Fitchburg State bound National Moot Court Tournament

FITCHBURG – Fitchburg State University is once again sending two teams to the American Moot Court Association National Tournament after another strong showing at the Eastern Regional contest held virtually on Nov. 20-21.

Fitchburg State seniors Samantha Beauchamp of Sutton and Theresa Dzierwinski of Ludlow finished sixth overall out of 54 teams at the regional competition, while senior Madison LaRoche of East Templeton and junior Benjamin Hill of Troy, N.H.

finished seventh overall.

The competition features teams of students arguing opposing sides of a legal issue, as in an appellate court proceeding. The competitors make oral arguments and respond to questions from a panel of judges, as well as submit written briefs.

This year’s case revolves around the First Amendment. The hypothetical case involves a business refusing to produce invitations for a same-sex wedding because of personal moral beliefs, and also

that firm being denied business by a local government because of past contributions to organizations declared hate groups. The business in question argues it is being punished for its associations.

Fitchburg State Professor Paul I. Weizer, a member of the Economics, History and Political Science Department, has coached the university’s moot court program since its inception. This year was the first time the competition had been conducted in the virtual space.

“The transition to virtual learning was very challenging for our student body and our moot court group was no exception,” Weizer said. “Yet, they persevered and ultimately excelled. I am extremely proud of the work they put in and the results they achieved.”

“Moot Court has undoubtedly been the best experience of my undergrad career,” LaRoche said. “Through it, I have learned invaluable skills, gained confidence, and made relationships that I know will

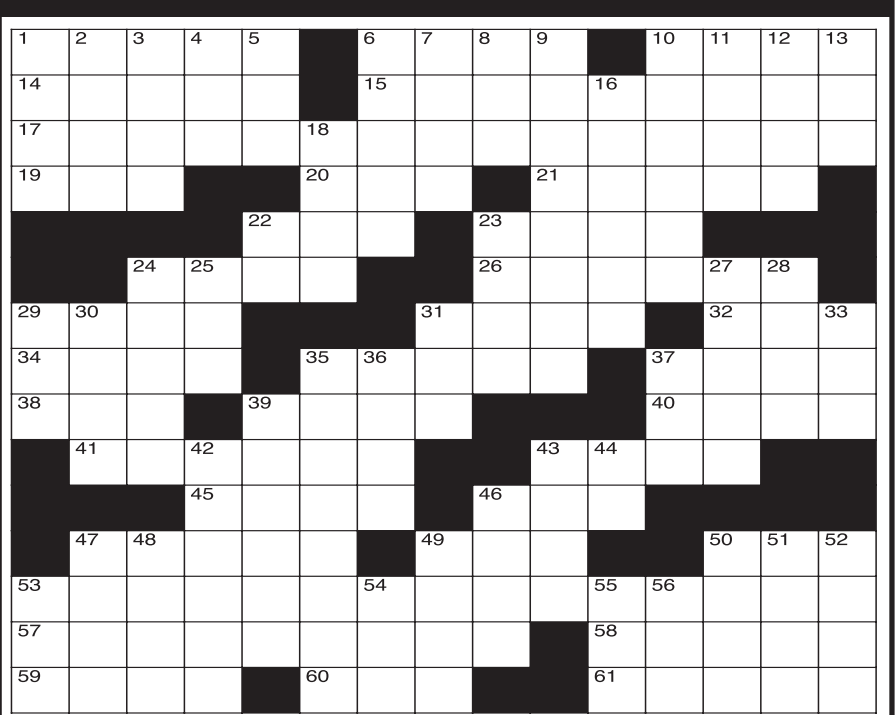
last a lifetime. I feel incredibly lucky to be part of such an amazing program under the best professor I’ve had, Dr. Weizer. I truly wish everyone had this opportunity that I have been given and will cherish forever.”

Competing skills included Bentley University, Berea College, California State University Fullerton, College of the Holy Cross, Colorado Christian University, Duke University, Georgia Southern University -

Armstrong Campus, Liberty University, Meredith College, Merrimack College, St. Thomas University, Suffolk University, SUNY Cortland, University of Chicago, and the University of Georgia.

The Fitchburg State contingent will compete in the national tournament in January.

Earlier this year, the American Moot Court Association ranked Fitchburg State’s program 14th in the nation.



- CLUES ACROSS**  
1. Partner to “oohed”  
6. Relaxing places  
10. Humorous monologue  
14. Simple elegance  
15. Bearable  
17. Disobedience  
19. Express delight  
20. Gov’t attorneys  
21. Wake up  
22. A type of band  
23. Remain as is  
24. Turfs  
26. Battle-ax  
29. Volcanic crater  
31. The mother of Jesus  
32. One’s life history  
34. “Rule, Britannia” composer  
35. Doubles  
37. Jacob \_\_, American journalist  
38. House pet  
39. S. African river  
40. Broad sashes  
41. Establish a foundation  
43. KGB double agent Aldrich \_\_  
45. Part of a book  
46. Taxi  
47. Pancakes made from buckwheat flour  
49. Train group (abbr.)  
50. Frames per second  
53. Have surgery  
57. Formal withdrawal from a federation  
58. Guitarist sounds  
59. Greek war god  
60. 2,000 lbs.  
61. Helps escape  
**CLUES DOWN**  
1. Currency exchange charge  
2. River in Tuscany  
3. Breakfast dish  
4. Defunct European currency  
5. Upper class young woman  
6. Part of a purse  
7. Self-contained units  
8. Boxing’s GOAT  
9. Legislators  
10. Flightless birds  
11. U. of Miami’s mascot is one  
12. Floating ice  
13. Low, marshy land  
16. Seldom  
18. Lyric poems  
22. Law enforcement agency (abbr.)  
23. Full extent of something  
24. \_\_ Claus  
25. Naturally occurring solid material  
27. Acquired brain injury behavior science (abbr.)  
28. Thirteen  
29. Partner to cheese  
30. Member of a Semitic people  
31. One thousandth of an inch  
33. Former CIA  
35. Most lemony  
36. Engage in  
37. Small Eurasian deer  
39. Provisions  
42. All humans have them  
43. Swiss river  
44. Storage term (abbr.)  
46. Famed Broadway lyricist Sammy  
47. Dutch colonist  
48. Full-grown pike fish  
49. Egyptian sun god  
50. Flute  
51. Flew off!  
52. Scottish tax  
53. Young women’s association  
54. Populous Brazilian city  
55. Malaysian Isthmus  
56. Pointed end of a pen

ANSWERS ON PAGE 10

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TOWN REMINDER  
WARE RIVER NEWS

T-BIRDS,  
continued from page 7

already turned our attention to next season and are actively working with the Blues, our season ticket holders, and corporate partners to ensure that 2021-2022 is our strongest season yet.”

A statement released by St. Louis Blues President of Hockey Operations/ General Manager Doug Armstrong said, “professional sports have been impacted by the inability to open arenas and facilities to their fans. That is particularly true

at the minor professional level where fan attendance is the lifeblood of business operations. We were truly excited to come to Springfield this season and are disappointed that COVID-19 has prevented this from happening. We look forward to working with the Thunderbirds in the 2021-22 season and beyond.”

For more information or to become a 2021-2022 Springfield Thunderbirds ticket member, call (413) 739-GOAL (4625) or visit www.SpringfieldThunderbirds.com.

RACING,  
continued from page 7

of Racing at Thompson in October of 2021.

“This iRacing series will give drivers and fans of Thompson Speedway a chance to come together during the cold winter months for some virtual racing,” Kyle Souza, owner of Souza Media, said. “We’re looking forward to watching the Thompson 300 in real-life, but we think this virtual experience will showcase some of what it will take to win the real-life event and get fans energized for the October 2021 race.”

A maximum of 29 drivers will start each race, in order to keep the car count reasonable on a tight, banked track, and produce green flag racing. Out of the 29 competitors, 28 drivers will qualify through the heats, consi’s and B-Main sessions, while one provisional is available for a most recent Thompson track champion or Modified, Late Model or Super Late Model champion, if needed. If no champions fail to qualify, the provisional may be used for a

promoters option. Qualifying will begin at 10 a.m. on each of the race days, while there will also be multiple practice sessions prior to race day.

In order to be eligible for the events, drivers must fit one of the requirements put in place by officials. Race officials have the final determination on eligibility and may elect to refund participants who register but don’t fit qualifications. For all three events, drivers must be:

A current or past full-time weekly competitor in Late Models, Super Late Models or Modifieds

A current or past touring series competitor in Late Models, Super Late Models or Modifieds

Immediate crew member of one of the above drivers -- defined as either a car owner, crew chief or spotter.

\*If all spots are not filled for the event five days prior to event start, fans of Thompson Speedway, Modifieds, Super Late Models or Late Models will be able to register to fill the spots\*

The first 60 entered drivers will be registered for the event.

WINTER SPORTS  
continued from page 7

Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Minnechaug, Westfield, and West Springfield, with Amherst added into the league this year. Amherst has been one of the top Division 3A teams in recent years.

Teams that are allowed to begin playing actual games could do so in about two weeks.

Basketball, swimming, and ice hockey were the sports approved to take place this winter. The season normally starts in mid-December.

Anyone who registers past that 60 number will be placed on a wait-list. Registration fees are \$15 per event, or \$45 for the entire series. Registration can be completed at kylesouza.com/thompson-iracing-series. In order for a registration to be counted as one of 60, payment must be received. Drivers who complete registration will be invited to the league on iRacing directly to confirm their registration has been received.

A payout is guaranteed for the top-five at the end of each race, with a minimum of \$50 to win the feature. The virtual Thompson 300 will pay at least \$125 to win. Sponsorship opportunities for the series are available by emailing kylesouzamedia@gmail.com. Sponsorships will include full race deals and contingency awards.

Virtual Thompson Series schedule:

January 23 -- SK Modified -- 100 laps

February 20 -- Late Models -- 100 laps

March 20 -- Tour-Type Modified -- 300 laps



# Church News

## Local pastor offers sermon

### Second Sunday after Christmas

#### “We Humble Ourselves Before You, Oh Lord”

(Our services can be watched on the church website at [www.barrechurch.com](http://www.barrechurch.com) and Facebook page)

#### Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 31 verses 7 - 14

##### I. Introduction:

We have entered a new year, 2021, and I am sure there are some among you, maybe all of you, saying thank goodness, 2020 and all the bad news it brought us, is gone. I have seen and heard many responses like that the past few days and have done my own little go away 2020 ritual as well! It was with mixed emotions that I welcomed the new year in, grateful for life, hoping and praying for renewal and healing, and remembering many who have lost their loved ones, those who are still sick, and all the caregivers, health care workers and many more on the front lines. I then delved deep into the calling of Jeremiah to understand what his message says to us today...

##### II. Jeremiah's prophecy of doom

Jeremiah is called by God to speak to the nation of Israel about the doom and destruction that will overcome them, because of their religious and moral iniquities. They must repent, confess their sins to Yahweh, so that they can be forgiven. He prophesied about a foreign invasion by the Babylonian Empire, and their eventual deportation and life in exile in Babylon. They will suffer immensely in this foreign land and be weakened in body and spirit. Their faith in God will dissipate. It will be disastrous. He warned the people of Israel against their self-reliance, their worshipping of idols, and separation from Yahweh, and so forth. In the words of Bernard W. Anderson in *The Living World of the Old Testament*, "...the ground had to be swept clean of false foundations, so that God might build and plant anew." We know that Judah, the Southern Kingdom was taken into the Babylonian exile, and earlier the Northern Kingdom, Israel was taken captive by Assyria.

Our passage is preceded by a few verses where both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms is being addressed. "I have loved you, Israel," says the Lord, and promised them that they will be restored and renewed. In Jeremiah's vision, these two kingdoms will be brought together in unification with one another.

##### III. Jeremiah's Prophecy of Redemption, and a New Covenant

In verses 8 and 9 we read about the conditions of the people of Judah as they traveled back from exile. There was the blind, the lame, and there were pregnant women, those in labor, and those weeping and suffering. This description is not telling us about the hunger and lack of water, the immense trauma they have suffered in exile. Their

physical, economic, and spiritual suffering was immense. They had been humiliated in that foreign land. These are the people whom God will bring back, we read in verse 8, "I will bring them from the land of the North" ....and in verse 9, "I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble".

Yahweh will be there, leading, guiding, comforting, and their journey will be made easier, so they would not stumble. Yahweh will liberate them from their oppressors and redeem them into a life of freedom and restoration. They will come to Zion with shouts of joy and will receive the bounty from the Lord. They will receive grain, new wine and oil, and they will receive the favor of the Lord.

So, while on the one hand Jeremiah was the prophet of such doom, Chapters 30 – 33 is also called "The Little Book of Comfort." with a message of hope for the people of Israel. Later in our Chapter we read how Yahweh will create a new covenant with the people of Israel, not like the Covenant with Moses, which was broken, says Anderson, but a new covenant that will fulfill the original intent of the Sinai Covenant. While the original Covenant was written on tablets of stone, the new Covenant will be written on their hearts. We see the fulfillment of that promise in the New Testament with the Covenant through the Son of God who would bring a message of the heart, of love and humility and forgiveness.

##### IV. What does God want for us?

It seems to me, historically that God always operates from a deep divine love for humanity, with the need to be in relationship with humanity, to protect and nurture, love and guide. There is also the expectation from God to be acknowledged as the Most High, the Only One to be worshipped. This is noticeable in verse 9 where Yahweh says, "They will come with weeping, they will pray as I bring them back." They will humble themselves before the Lord, in their suffering, and in their humbling and praying state, they will be restored by God.

For the people of Israel, it seemed hard to be faithful to one God, because of the physical temptations they faced, the struggles they went through, how they relied on their own strength to get through difficult times, and in doing so, forgot where their help came from.

##### V. Conclusion

This Jeremiah message made me reflect on how much has gone wrong in our world today, even before Covid-19. It became clear that we had our own problems, even with all the knowledge we have and material things we possess. There have been times when I cringed at another news cycle about a mass shooting, about the opioid pandemic that has taken so many lives, poverty, corruption, unnecessary wars, and the feeling that maybe we have just become so numb, that the new shooting and the new death became just a statistic, not because we are bad people, but the problems

became so huge, and part of life, that that became life itself, and that we cannot manage them on our own. This pandemic has revealed much about who we are today. There are those who genuinely care about what happens, with real care for one another, and then there is a phenomenon of recklessness, of little care for what happens to those who suffer, and death and dying have become just a part of life. Lack of respect for human life has been revealed in awful ways.

While these problems appear to be different from the olden days of Israel, they are still problems affecting humanity on huge scale. And, if God is the same God wanting to have a relationship with humanity, then that means God sees what is going on and is seeking to liberate us from ourselves, from the destructive path humanity had been on lately. I was wondering whether we as a people have drifted away too far from our connectedness to our God and with one another, to a place of self-sufficiency and individualism, with the ability to fix things ourselves. This does not mean we do not pray, or we do not talk about God. Of course, we do, and of course we go to church, and of course we pray.

I am also not saying that's why we have the pandemic. I will not go that far, but could this devastating situation we are in, be a way for us to weep and pray on large scale, like the Israelites of old in verse 9? Could we be humbled individually and collectively, and could there be a broad spiritual renewal in this world where we empty ourselves from our egos, and allow God to speak deeply into our hearts and bring the transformation that is needed within and among us? God knows our abilities, our lives, our income, our thoughts and intentions. God knows we are smart, and we can do things, but being smart and able, and having an income may not always mean we have what it takes to always see the other person as my neighbor whom I should love and respect, and handle with care as I want to be respected and handled, to bring healing to this world.

I so hope and pray for us as a people, a world, a nation, a community, a church, families to leap into the arms of God and receive the healing we all need. That deep love and respect and humility that only God can give, is what I see Jeremiah was urging the Israelites to return to. God sees those unresolved issues and wants us to be healed. Let us recognize our own insecure foundations, whatever they are, and allow God to enter our lives in ways that will restore and renew, according to God's will. If you feel this message is not for you personally, I urge you to pray for a world that needs Divine intervention. May 2021 be a better year for all of us, with

God's help, mercy and guidance.  
Amen

**Pastor Margaret Keyser**  
*Barre Congregational Church*

# Obituaries

### Nancy A. Dean, 60

CHARLTON – Nancy A. Dean, 60 of Charlton, passed away Friday, January 1, 2021 of complications from the Covid virus. She was born in Ware. Nancy was the daughter of the late Russell O. and Susan E. (Goodfield) Dean and lived many years in New Braintree with her family. The last eleven years were at the Overlook Masonic Health Care Facility in Charlton.

She was a graduate of Pathfinder Regional High School in 1979. She worked at Quaboag On the Common Nursing Home for more than 20 years.

Nancy will be lovingly missed by her sister Cindy and her husband Orrie Mason of Jefferson; her brother Rodney O. Dean of West Brookfield and her cousin Suanne and her husband, John Despres of



Ware, along with many cousins and friends.

She was predeceased by her parents Russell and Susan Dean as well as her brother, Roger.

Nancy also leaves her niece Bethany Greene and her husband William; two grand-nephews, Logan and Jacob of Coventry, CT; her nephew Todd Mason and his wife Jillayne of Kingfisher, OK; two grand-nieces, Alexandria and her fiancé Ryan McDonald and Cassandra Mason of Edmond, OK.

Nancy held many offices in New Braintree and Sunrise Pomona Granges. She enjoyed sending cards of cheer, thinking of you and birthday greetings. She loved reading, doing word searches but was particularly fond of her cats. Nancy struggled most of her life with Myotonic Dystrophy.

Our family deeply appreciates the wonderful care she received at Overlook Masonic Home. We will never forget the many acts of kindness and compassionate care she received during her stay. The nurse and doctors in ICU at UMass were caring and special to the very end.

A Celebration of Life for Nancy will be held at the Overlook Masonic Health Care Facility in Charlton at a later date. A private Graveside Service will be held in Hardwick Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Nancy's name to: Overlook Masonic Health System. Mail to: Overlook Staff Appreciate Fund, c/o Josh Gaskell, 88 Masonic Home, Charlton, MA 01507.

Varnum Funeral Home, Inc., 43 East Main St., in West Brookfield is assisting her family with arrangements.

An online guest book is available at [varnumfuneralhome.com](http://varnumfuneralhome.com).

### Kimberly J. Gregoire, 66

RUTLAND – Kimberly J (Wedge) Gregoire of Rutland, 66, passed away on Friday, Jan. 1, 2021 after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

She was born on Thanksgiving, Nov. 25, 1954 to Raymond and Barbara Wedge; both pre-deceased of Spencer and was a joyful presence to all, who knew her.

She was a valedictorian graduate of St. Mary's School and David Prouty High School in Spencer (1972), and a summa cum laude graduate of Worcester State University (BS accounting) and Anna Maria College Paxton (MS Ed).

She enjoyed a variety of careers that included stints as a grant writer for the Roger Davis lab at the UMASS Medical School, as finance director of Girls Inc in Worcester, and her all time favorite career move, comprehensive sixth grade grammar school teacher at St. Peter's Central Catholic School Worcester.

She is survived by her husband of 48 years, David N. Gregoire of Rutland, two children Jeremy D. Gregoire and his wife Stacy (Scallion) and their son Nicholas



of Spencerport, N.Y. and Christopher D. Gregoire and his wife Tammy (Harding) and their daughter Erin of Rutland.

She had an extraordinary, ordinary sort of life that was full of laughter and love and delight and she will never be forgotten by all those who knew her as an always supportive friend, who was spontaneous (capable of talking to a wrong number for 20 plus minutes) and generous (like taking a wet, cross country bicyclist that she met at a laundromat home so that he could get a hot meal before heading off to who knows where) and a passionate teacher and supporter of children (especially girls, because girls don't get enough support, dammit) all over the world via UNICEF, CCF and CFCA (now Outbound).

She loved camping and traveling and visited all but three states in the US and all of the provinces of Canada as well as trips abroad to Scotland and to India where she was especially delighted to meet her "sponsored daughter, Swathi and her family" in Hyderabad. She loved riding pillion (behind her husband) on their motorcycles but

didn't want to ride her own motorcycle because "riding pillion is fun and riding her own bike would have required her to pay attention to the road and who wants to miss the scenery?"

Beneath that seemingly soft and warm exterior was a core of steel, she fought the disease for over 10 years and she willingly participated in clinical trials to advance the science of Alzheimer's Disease treatments - 48 years of marriage to someone like that is way too short.

Pursuant to her wishes, Kim will be cremated. A date for a Memorial Mass (probably this spring) is pending.

There are no calling hours and no flowers or donations are requested. Just make sure to give lots hugs and appreciation to those who lives light up your own life and who, due to the storm un-drang of life you sometimes take for granted.

Her family wants to especially thank the staff of Quabbin Valley Health Care, Daniel Shays Highway in Athol for their dedication and care during the last trials of Kim's life.

Witty's Funeral Home, 158 South Main Street, Orange, is assisting the family.

Online guest book at [WWW.WITTYFUNERALHOME.COM](http://WWW.WITTYFUNERALHOME.COM).

### Laurie J. Puliafico, 59

BARRE – Laurie J. Puliafico, 59, a Barre native, died peacefully on Dec. 29, 2020, after a long illness.

Born in Holden, she was the daughter of the late Salvatore (Sam) and Dorothy (Weighill) Puliafico. She was a graduate of Quabbin Regional High School and Fitchburg State University where she achieved her bachelor and master's degrees in education. Laurie began her lifelong teaching career at Quabbin Regional and went on to teach at Deveraux School, Eagle Hill School and in the Barre and Ware Public School systems for many years. She was devoted to her students and spent time tutoring after school and many years during summer school. She loved to play clarinet in the Quabbin Community Band and also enjoyed working on clarinets to provide instruments for students.

Laurie was an avid skier, serving on the National Ski Patrol and as an advisor to school ski clubs. She taught ski lessons at



Pine Ridge in Barre and also enjoyed working on the New England Lost Ski Areas Project, an organization concerned with the history of downhill skiing areas, mostly in the northeastern United States. She also volunteered countless hours with the New England Ski Museum.

Laurie is survived by her four older siblings: Charles Puliafico of Monson, Robert (Corrine) Puliafico of Rutland, Paul (Melissa) Puliafico of Brookfield and Cynthia (Mark) Clarkson of Barre; eight nieces and nephews: Robert, Charlene, David, Gayla, Steven, Amy, Maria and Amanda; 13 great nieces and nephews and especially delighted in visits with the youngest three in the past four years. She is also survived by her large extended family of cousins from across the country, whom she remained connected to via social media.

A celebration of Laurie's life will be held at a later date at the convenience of the fami-

## DEATH NOTICES

**Dean, Nancy A.**  
Death Jan. 1, 2021  
Private Graveside Service

**Gregoire, Kimberly J.**  
Death Friday, Jan. 1, 2021  
Witty Funeral Home  
A Memorial Mass will be held later

**Puliafico, Laurie J.**  
Death Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2020  
Pillsbury Funeral Home  
Celebration of Life at latter date

**Sawtell, Donald M.. "Don"**  
Death Friday, Dec. 25, 2020  
Boucher Funeral Home, Gardner  
Service will be private and held at convenience of family.

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## Barre Gazette OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

*Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.*



# Public Safety

## Hardwick Police Log

For the week of Dec. 28-Jan. 4, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 96 building/property checks, 1 animal call, 13 emergency 911 calls, 4 radar assignments, 15 directed/area patrols, 13 traffic controls and 47 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

**Monday, Dec. 28**  
7:43 p.m. 911 – Medical  
Emergency Ruggles Street – Unknown Outcome

**Tuesday, Dec. 29**  
5:13 p.m. Phone – Medical Alarm  
Hardwick Road – Services Rendered  
7:12 p.m. 911 – Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations Main Street – Spoken To

**Wednesday, Dec. 30**  
3:39 a.m. 911 – Welfare Check  
Church Lane – Taken/Referred to Other Agency  
8:37 a.m. 911 – Medical  
Emergency Main Street – Transported to Hospital  
9:47 a.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Main Street – Arrest(s) Made

**Thursday, Dec. 31**  
1:14 a.m. 911 – Unattended Death  
Church Street – Investigated  
12:54 p.m. Phone – Fraud Turkey  
Street – Report Taken

6:20 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Lower Road – Written Warning  
7:18 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Main Street – Arrest(s) Made  
8:35 p.m. Phone – Welfare Check  
Ludlow – Merge  
11:38 p.m. Phone – Complaint Pine  
Street – Negative Contact

**Friday, Jan. 1**  
2:04 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Written  
Warning  
2:14 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Written  
Warning  
3:01 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Written  
Warning  
3:13 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Citation  
Issued  
3:33 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Written  
Warning  
4:01 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Written  
Warning  
4:09 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Petersham Road – Written  
Warning  
5:02 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Main Street – Written Warning  
5:12 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Hardwick Road – Citation Issued  
6:50 p.m. 911 – Gunshots Pine

Street – Negative Contact  
9:31 p.m. 911 – Medical  
Emergency Turkey Street –  
Transported to Hospital

**Saturday, Jan. 2**  
7:22 a.m. 911 – Utility Issues  
Barre Road – Taken/Referred to Other  
Agency  
8:46 a.m. Phone – Fire, Illegal  
Burn/Permit Pine Street – Extinguished  
3:05 p.m. Phone – Property  
Damage Barre Road – Report Taken  
5:18 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Main Street – Written Warning  
5:37 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle  
Stop Lower Road – Summons Issued  
7:23 p.m. 911 – Suspicious Activity  
Hardwick Road – Negative Contact

**Sunday, Jan. 3**  
9:58 a.m. Phone – Threat Main  
Street – Investigated  
1:30 p.m. 911 – Medical  
Emergency North Road – Transported  
to Hospital  
2:08 p.m. 911 – Assist Citizen  
Hardwick Road – Services Rendered  
9:55 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard  
Muddy Brook Road – Taken/Referred  
to Other Agency

**Monday, Jan. 4**  
7:12 a.m. 911 – Medical  
Emergency Greenwich Road –  
Services Rendered

## New Braintree Police Log

For the week of Dec. 28-Jan. 4, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 24 building/property checks, 4 radar assignments, 2 motor vehicle stop, 16 directed/area patrols, 8 traffic controls and 3 emergency 911 calls in the town of New Braintree.

**Monday, Dec. 28**  
2:01 p.m. 911 – 911/Hang-up Call  
Scott Road – Checked/Secured

**Wednesday, Dec. 30**  
6:04 a.m. 911 – Motor Vehicle  
Accident Barre Road – Report Taken  
7:43 a.m. Phone – Safety Hazard  
Ware Road – Taken/Referred to Other  
Agency

**Thursday, Dec. 31**  
9:50 a.m. Phone – Complaint  
Cemetery Road – Report Taken

**Friday, Jan. 1**  
11:17 a.m. Phone – Disturbance  
Utley Road – Report Taken

**Saturday, Jan. 2**  
7:47 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard  
Gilbertville Road – Taken/Referred to  
Other Agency

**Sunday, Jan. 3**  
6:04 p.m. 911 – Misidial Gilbertville  
Road – Spoken To

## Is it safe for pregnant women to get the coronavirus vaccine?

SPRINGFIELD — Is it safe for pregnant women to get the coronavirus vaccine?

That’s a question that two Baystate Medical Center doctors contemplated together recently - one a primary care physician at Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center, who is also board certified in infectious diseases, and the other an OB/GYN.

Dr. Amanda Westlake learned in September that she was expecting her third child. As an infectious disease specialist, when she visited with her OB/GYN, Dr. Katie Barker of Baystate Wesson Women’s Group, she was already familiar with much of the emerging literature on pregnancy and COVID-19. It is concisely stated on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website that:

“Based on what we know at this time, pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared to non-pregnant people. Additionally, pregnant people with COVID-19 might be at increased risk for other adverse outcomes, such as preterm birth.”

But when the two doctors came together to discuss whether Dr. Westlake should get the coronavirus vaccine, the answer wasn’t that simple — there is no scientific study on whether or not the vaccine is safe for pregnant women.

“Pfizer did not include pregnant women in its clinical trials to establish the safety and efficacy of their vaccine (it is common in clinical trials to exclude pregnant women). That was unfortunate because our professional organization, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has long advocated for women to be involved in vaccine trials,” said Dr. Barker.

“As a result, we do not have specific data on which to make a decision about pregnant women receiving the vaccine. However,

we have no reason now to suspect that it would work differently or be harmful to pregnant women, which is something I tell my patients every day,” she added.

And, when studies are completed on the vaccine’s effects on pregnant women now being inoculated against the virus, Dr. Barker said she would be surprised if they discover anything unexpected.

Recognizing that pregnant women everywhere would need guidance, the Shared Decision-Making: COVID Vaccination in Pregnancy working group at the University of Massachusetts Medical School — Baystate was created under the leadership of Dr. Elizabeth Schoenfeld, an Emergency Medicine physician at Baystate.

Dr. Schoenfeld, a shared decision-making researcher in the hospital’s Institute for Healthcare Delivery and Population Science, has experience making decision aids to help patients make decisions together with their doctors. Because of the lack of evidence to guide recommendations for pregnant women, a shared decision aid was needed to help women understand the risks and benefits and the unknowns.

“Shared decision making helps patients understand their choices and come to an informed decision with their doctors about their care. It is a way for patients to have their voices heard when deciding what the next step in their medical care will be. And a decision aid is a tool to help facilitate a discussion between a doctor and patient such as, “Should I get the coronavirus vaccine,” said Dr. Schoenfeld.

The clinical researcher noted that “in general the vaccine is highly recommended and safe” and although there was no hard data available on pregnancy and the vaccine, it wasn’t as if “there was no evidence at all about the vaccine to share in an aid.”

“Certainly, for many pregnant

women the pros outweigh the cons,” said Dr. Schoenfeld, who noted that when putting together the decision aid it was important to involve multiple stakeholders, such as maternal-fetal medicine experts, COVID experts and pregnant healthcare workers.

The result is a 6-page decision aid on the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines that starts with the basics: “I’m pregnant. Should I get a COVID vaccine?” It discusses a woman’s options, the benefits and risks of getting an mRNA COVID vaccine, and other information to help pregnant women make an informed decision. There are also additional details about breastfeeding, noting the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM) report that there is no reason to believe that the vaccine affects the safety of breastmilk.

Since completing the aid, it has been shared via Twitter and with various national professional networks such as maternal fetal medicine doctors, obstetricians, emergency medicine doctors, and medical informatics leaders. Based on feedback from those who have received the aid, it is being used at Boston Medical Center, Kaiser Southern California, Mass General Hospital, and in multiple other practices including Texas, and all around the country.

“We have received so much positive feedback. In fact, one woman from Costa Rica asked if we had a Spanish version of the document. We were able to quickly create Spanish and Russian versions and have made them available as well,” said Dr. Schoenfeld.

To view the latest version of the decision guide, visit: <https://www.baystatehealth.org/covid19/vaccine/pregnancy>

For more information about Baystate Health, people may visit [baystatehealth.org](http://baystatehealth.org).

### NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue’s relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the Barre Gazette, please email [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com).

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## Baystate Health doctors weigh in on what’s good for you

SPRINGFIELD – Now that a stressful 2020 has come to an end, there are many ways to make 2021 healthy and safe for you and your family.

Doctors at Baystate Health suggest setting realistic goals and prioritizing what is most important to you, taking small steps, and remembering not to beat yourself up if you encounter a setback in your health goals for 2021.

Some healthy goals to consider as you continue on your journey to good health are:

• **Make A Plan for Good Overall Health** – While weight loss,



Dr. Linda Schoonover

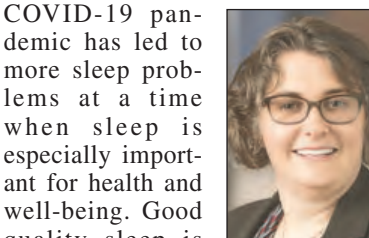
health screenings and stress reduction are among some of the best ways to achieve and maintain better health, creating a plan that is manageable is the key to success. Look at the new year as a time to set small, attainable goals that you can maintain throughout the year, that will also lead to long term success and better health.

Now is a great time to make an appointment for an annual exam and include your physician in your health goals for the year. For those who don’t have a primary care provider, the best time to choose a doctor is before you need one. Over time, your health care needs may change or you may face a new health challenge. The relationship you have with your healthcare provider, who knows you and your medical history, can lead to a better overall outcome that will protect your health. Also, as the global telemedicine trend continues, especially with the advent of COVID-19, it provides a fast and convenient way for you to connect with your doctor for urgent needs such as fever, cough, and skin rash, as well as management of chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Whether you want to lose weight, quit smoking, or reduce stress, your healthcare provider can suggest additional resources such as support groups, reading material, or if appropriate, medications or aids that can help. Getting advice from your primary care provider and support from friends and family is a great way to keep your New Year’s health resolutions going all year long.

— Dr. Linda Schoonover, Baystate Primary Care at Baystate Wing Hospital

• **Don’t Allow Sleep Problems To Affect Your Health** – The



Dr. Karin Johnson

COVID-19 pandemic has led to more sleep problems at a time when sleep is especially important for health and well-being. Good quality sleep is important for preventing infections and keeping your immune system working well. Studies have shown that sleep deprived people don’t mount the same immune response after vaccinations as good sleepers, so it is important to make sure you get a good night’s sleep prior to getting a flu or COVID vaccine. A recent study published in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine by Baystate Health’s Dr. Eva Mok showed increased rates of flu in patients with untreated sleep apnea. So, getting good quality sleep is just as important as getting enough sleep. If you are having difficulty sleeping or signs of poor-quality sleep with loud snoring, difficulty staying asleep, urinating frequently at night or daytime sleepiness or tiredness, you may benefit from a sleep medicine evaluation.

— Dr. Karin Johnson, medical director, Baystate Health Regional Sleep Program and Baystate Medical Center Sleep Laboratory

• **Get Vaccinated** – With all the attention on with the COVID-19 vac-



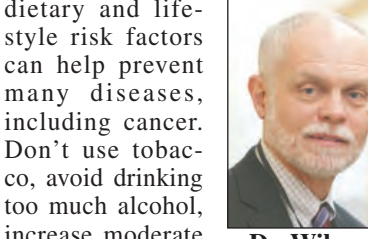
Dr. Armando Paez

cines, it is not too late to get your flu shot if you haven’t received it yet. Flu vaccine was updated this year to match the anticipated circulating strains. If you belong to any of the groups prioritized to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, please get it. Both the flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are important means in preventing serious respiratory infections. Beyond

the flu and COVID vaccines, it is important to keep up to date on adult immunizations. The protection you have from some childhood vaccines can wear off over time requiring you to get booster shots.

— Dr. Armando Paez, chief, Infectious Disease Division, Baystate Health

• **Reducing Your Risks for Cancer** – Reducing identified

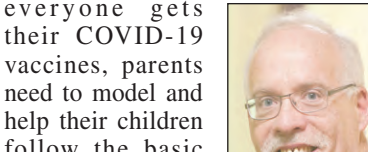


Dr. Wilson Mertens

dietary and lifestyle risk factors can help prevent many diseases, including cancer. Don’t use tobacco, avoid drinking too much alcohol, increase moderate aerobic exercise to at least 30 minutes

daily most days of the week (moderately vigorous walking will do), and if overweight, shed some pounds.

— Dr. Wilson Mertens - vice president and medical director,



Dr. John O'Reilly

Cancer Service, chief, Division of Hematology Oncology, Baystate Regional Cancer Program, Baystate Health

• **Keeping Kids Healthy** – Until everyone gets their COVID-19 vaccines, parents need to model and help their children follow the basic COVID-19 safety guidelines of mask wearing, hand-washing, social distancing, and avoiding indoor gatherings with anyone who is not in your close family pod. Parents need to keep their children healthy by keeping up with their regular visits with their pediatricians to monitor their growth, development, general overall health, to give them any needed vaccines to prevent serious infections, and to keep up with medications for common conditions such as asthma.

During stressful times, parents need to be very aware of their children’s mental health, checking in with older children on a daily basis about how they are doing, and watching for any signs of depression and anxiety related to the pandemic and social isolation. Also, during the pandemic there are 3 basic tasks for parents.

1. Tell your children that you love them and show them that love throughout the day in a multitude of ways.

2. Tell your children that you will do the best you can to keep them safe during the pandemic, and demonstrate that by modeling mask wearing, handwashing, social distancing and avoiding indoor gatherings with people who are not in your close family.

3. Tell your children that whatever happens during the pandemic you will work together as a family to overcome any difficulties. Modeling resiliency will teach your children the skills that they will need to overcome the difficult problems they may face as they grow older. Pediatricians are here to help patients and families through these difficult times, and parents can reach out to their pediatricians with any concerns about their children.

— Dr. John O’Reilly, chief, General Pediatrics, Baystate Children’s Hospital

• **Reducing Your Risk for Diabetes** – Over 34 million

Americans have diabetes and 88 million American adults – approximately one in three – have prediabetes.

Prediabetes puts you at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes and also increases your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. By modifying your risk factors and adopting a healthy lifestyle – from eating more nutritious foods and limiting your portions to exercising to maintain an appropriate weight – you can help delay or prevent some of the serious complications of diabetes such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney damage and limb amputations. Aside from reducing your risks for diabetes, if you want to maintain good health in 2021 and beyond, consider if you are overweight eating 20% less which can lead to slow sustained weight loss over time; fit in exercise, even 10 minutes at a time which can lead to significant physical and mental health benefits; addressing your mental health which can be the primary barrier to a healthier you.

Also, quit smoking, this is the best decision you can make for your

health.

— Dr. Chelsea Gordner, director, Baystate Inpatient Diabetes Service, Departments of Adult and Pediatric Diabetes at Baystate Medical Center and Baystate Children’s Hospital

• **Good Mental Health** – There are many ways to improve your mental health. Consider getting outdoors for walks in nature, ideally with others (socially distanced and masked). Find opportunities to be kind. Even though many of us are hurting in various ways nowadays, it’s not unlikely that there are others who are hurting even more. It’s important to remember that we all have things to give: attention, compassion, listening, forgiveness, it doesn’t have to be material. Giving feels good year round, much better than receiving.

Also, be kind to yourself: treat your body well by eating healthy food and not overwhelming it with unhealthy substances such as too much alcohol, sugar, and more; don’t be mean and punitive towards yourself, if you notice mistakes you’ve made or things you don’t like about yourself–acknowledge them and make a commitment to change, make a plan to change, and get started.

— Dr. Barry Sarvet, chair, Department of Psychiatry, Baystate Health

• **Women’s Health** – Annual preventive exams are vital in detecting conditions like breast cancer or cervical dysplasia at an early, manageable, and treatable stage. The well-woman visit is a perfect time to address bothersome symptoms, set health goals and learn updates on disease prevention. Checking in annually with an established provider supports a trusted relationship which facilitates seamless care if a medical problem arises.

— Dr. Julie Thompson, FACOG, IFMCP, chief, Obstetrics, Baystate Franklin Medical Center and Pioneer Women’s Health

• **When Emergencies Happen** – My health tip for the new year is one that will come in handy for a lifetime. I often get the question: “When should I go to the Emergency Department compared to Urgent Care?”

It’s not really a simple answer, but a good rule of thumb when any new, acute, severe, uncontrolled symptoms need to be addressed in the Emergency Department. For example, if you are having the worst headache of your life or experiencing any new acute severe shortness of breath, chest pain or abdominal pain, you should go the Emergency Department. If you are having any bleeding from an injury that is not under control with simple first aid measures, that also belongs in the ED. If you are experiencing any new neurologic symptoms or new seizures/convulsions, that also needs to be attended to in the ED.

Anytime there is a loss of consciousness from any cause, that should also be evaluated in the ED. Urgent Care is an ideal locale for the care of minor injuries and ailments like coughs, colds, earaches, urinary tract infections, insect bites and stings. Urgent Care is also appropriate for acute flare-ups of chronic conditions such as migraine headaches, asthma, gout, and eczema.

Most urgent care centers have on-site x-rays and can take care of acute fractures and other minor traumas. It is also important to know during the current pandemic that you should not be afraid to go to the ED with any new acute severe symptoms as all hospitals have protocols in place to protect patients and their families from potential exposure to COVID-19. Trying to “tough it out at home” can be a fatal mistake if it’s an acute heart attack or stroke.

— Dr. Brian P. Sutton, FACEP, medical director, Baystate Health Urgent Care

For more information on Baystate Health, visit [Baystatehealth.org](http://Baystatehealth.org).

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# Barbara Rogers-Scharneck re-appointed to National Farm Bureau Committee

MARLBOROUGH — Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation announces that Barbara Rogers-Scharneck from Ward Hill has been re-appointed by American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall to its Promotion and Education committee. This national committee is focused on bridging the gap between farmers and consumers by providing tools and resources to other Farm Bureau members who are eager to help

share agriculture’s story. Her responsibilities and roles in the committee will continue to include: Surfacing, prioritizing and developing ideas for agricultural promotion and education. Providing effective, practical tools for implementing grassroots projects. Increasing opportunities for training volunteers to be effective agricultural advocates. “Barbara has been an excellent representative for MFBF on

this committee for the past two years and we are excited she has been re-appointed,” said MFBF President Mark Amato. “Her leadership has helped focus our statewide P&E committee and we look forward to her continuing this effort during the next two years.” Rogers-Scharneck is a fourth-generation farmer in eastern Massachusetts. On the farm, Rogers-Scharneck and her family raise replacement heifers and grow

feed hay, silage, corn, strawberries, pumpkins, apples, butternut squash and carrots. They also have a You-Pick operation and offer school tours. The farm also includes a full-service garden center, where the family grows their own annuals and perennials. She has been involved in Essex County Farm Bureau board of directors, the statewide P&E committee and recently was appointed to MFBF’s board of directors

as her county representative. She also is involved in the Topsfield Fair and Soroptimist International. Rogers-Scharneck also actively volunteers in her children’s school events and fundraisers. She holds associate’s and bachelor’s degrees and has completed several half-marathons. She will be re-appointed in March 2021 during the AFBF’s FUSION conference. She will serve for another two-years until 2023. The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation is a non-profit organization representing nearly 6,000 family members across the Commonwealth. MFBF is an advocate for farmers, run by farmer members who develop policies through its grassroots process. For more information about the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, people may visit [www.mfbf.net](http://www.mfbf.net).

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